JOHN L. STODDARD'S LECTURES

SOUTH TYRŌL AROUND LAKE GARDA

THE DOLOMITES

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A SPANISH CHESTNUT TREE IN SOUTH TYRŌL.

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SOUTH TYRŌL

ALONG THE PASSER.

Obermais! Obermais!
Charming bit of Paradise,
Where the palm and snow are blended,
Where life's joys seem never ended,
Where the purl of limpid streams
Haunts the traveler's deepest dreams;
Girt by miles of terraced vines,
Birthplace of the purest wines,
Sheltered by imposing mountains,
Musical from countless fountains,
Bathed in sunshine, bright with flowers,
Studded with old Roman towers,
Castles, convents, shrines and walls,
Whose strange history enthralls, —
Jewel of fair South Tyrōl,
Thou hast won my heart and soul!

OBERMAIS, LOOKING TOWARD ITALY.

THE Obermais thus described is the favorite residential suburb of Meran, the former capital of the Tyrōl, that lovely trysting-place of North and South, where the keen Alpine air grows soft beneath the wooing of the Italian sun. The theme is a congenial one ; for, on retiring from a life of travel far and wide through many a clime and kingdom of the civilized world, the author has selected for a home, in which to spend the Indian Summer of his life, this southward-sloping

ENTRANCE TO THE VINTSCHGAU VALLEY, SEEN FROM OBERMAIS.

valley of the Tyrolese Alps, made beautiful by arbored vineyards, picturesque castles, and romantic ruins, protected from bleak northern storms by a precipitous range of mountains nine or ten thousand feet in height. So glorious are these mountains at all times and seasons, that it is difficult to say when they are most inspiring. But, marvelous as they look when the red torch of morning kindles on their stainless crests a line of crimson fires, or when the evening light begins to weave its golden

threads across the valley, and to enfold their silvery summits in a purple veil, — they are to me most solemn and impressive when, on a winter night, I watch their undulating snow-fields gleaming in the moonlight, like foam-flecked billows in a stormy sea, running for miles along the sky.

IN THE AUTHOR'S GARDEN.

These words are written in the author's high-walled garden, at a table canopied by rose-vines fifteen feet in height. His outstretched hand can touch a fig tree; a little farther rises, sentry-like, a palm; a score of long arcades within the adjoining vineyard offer parallel rows of cool, green vistas to his view; and near them clumps of bamboo rustle in the April breeze. Yet, if he lifts his eyes, he sees beyond these, and above a tinted cloud of apple, peach, and almond blossoms, a chain of ice-capped summits only a few miles

SUNSHINE AND SHADOW IN MERAN

away! The altitude of Meran is one thousand, that of Obermais from twelve hundred to sixteen hundred, feet above the level of the sea. Its winter climate corresponds to the summer climate of high mountain regions; that is to say, it is then warm in the sun, invariably cold at night, and crisp and frosty in the morning and evening, till the sun's rays begin to affect the pure, dry air. Snow always falls in abundance on the mountains; and once or twice at least it may be expected in Meran itself, though here it quickly disappears. Spring begins here some four weeks earlier than on the other side of the Alps, and winter is much shorter than in northern Germany. To claim that Meran has no bad weather would be untrue; but storms are rare, and it has come to be a proverb that what is bad in South Tyrōl is much worse elsewhere. Fog is almost unknown. On the contrary, Meran is singularly free from dampness, and is often blessed for weeks at a time in winter with a succession of bright, exhilarating days, when the mere act of breathing is a pleasure, and living in the open air a positive delight; while every outlook toward the spotless mountains, crystalline in splendor, lifts the spirit toward its loftiest ideals of the beautiful and the sublime. The most remarkable climatic features of Meran during the winter months are wind-

BLOSSOMING TIME.

THE GERMAN PROTESTANT CHURCH, MERAN.

lessness and wealth of sunshine. In spring, strong winds occasionally sweep down through the valleys from the Alps to Italy; but, in the fall and winter, weeks frequently elapse when the trees are scarcely stirred by even the lightest breeze, although the air continues wonderfully pure and bracing. As for the sun, this sheltered mountain-nest is a veritable focus for the solar rays, whose concentration and unclouded lustre render nature glorious, and vivify all living creatures privileged to enjoy them.

"Thou hast indeed a magic spell
Alike for every season's span;
The God of light hath dowered thee well,
Tyrol's sweet paradise, Meran!"

THE "ARA DIANÆ."

Moreover, with its charms of scenery and sunshine, patent to all observers, there is blended, for the satisfaction of the student, the fascination of antiquity. At every step we tread upon historic ground. Thus, at the entrance to the Vintschgau valley, at a little distance from Meran, is a plateau, distinctly visible from Obermais, known as the Roman Terrace. There, in the second century after Christ, stood a temple to Diana, a fine memorial of which exists in the so-called "Ara Dianæ," discovered there in 1824, and now preserved in the Museum at Innsbruck. This "altar" was undoubtedly the pedestal for a statue of the goddess, as the niche upon its summit plainly indicates, and is especially inter-

THE "TOLL" BRIDGE ON THE ROMAN TERRACE.

esting from the information furnished by its inscription. For on its front are sculptured words which the historian Mommsen thus translates:

"In honor of the temple of the most holy
DIANA,
Aetetus, a freedman of the imperial household,
and the revenue collector of the Mais Station,
dedicated this altar and statue on the
Ides of August,
in the Consulship of
Præsens."

This mention of a well-known consul gives indubitable proof that the shrine and statue were consecrated here on the thirteenth of August, 180 A.D. Moreover, the allusion to the revenue of the Mais Station confirms the belief, long held by scholars, that probably in Obermais itself, at least in its immediate vicinity, stood formerly the "Statio Majensis,"—an imperial Customs Station at the Roman settlement called Maia. The collector's office was probably located, not in the settlement itself, but near the temple of Diana, on the Roman Terrace; for the entrance to the Vintschgau valley is still called the "Töll,"—a name apparently derived from the Latin "Telonium," or "Custom House."

It was in the fifteenth year before the birth of Christ that

DRUSUS, THE CONQUEROR OF THE TYROL.

Tiberius and Drusus, the step-sons of the Emperor Augustus, subdued the warlike tribes inhabiting the Tyrōl, and brought their country under the dominion of the Cæsars. As soon as possible after this event a military road was made through the subjugated region, in conformity with Roman usage, in order to connect Rome's widely scattered legionary camps, and to establish an easy means of communication between the heart of the empire and the outlying provinces. This road was the Via Claudia Augusta, which led directly northward from Verona, turned sharply to the left at Botzen, and thence passed through Meran and the Vintschgau valley on to Augsburg, and was the first great highway that united Italy and Germany.

FOUNDATION OF THE OLD ROMAN BRIDGE.

Traces of this may even now be seen, within an hour's walk of Obermais, not only in some sections of the ancient pavement,

MERAN, OBERMAIS, AND MT. IFINGER.

but in the square-cut, massive blocks which once formed part of the old Roman bridge that spanned the river Etsch at a point somewhat lower than the present crossing. Along this famous thoroughfare, therefore, marched for at least four hundred years the legions of imperial Rome; and the well-situated, easily defended spot, now designated by the general name of Meran, was for the passing troops a favorite halting-place. Here also were extensive storehouses for grain and war materials intended for the nourishment and equipment of the transport trains, which moved continually to and fro between the northern provinces and Rome. As time went on, and life and property in this region became more secure, these noble slopes of verdure and of snow attracted residents, until a considerable Roman town spread over the territory adjoining the Station, which seems to have had substantial fortifications and a permanent

garrison. Proofs of this fact occasionally come to light, even at the present time, particularly in Obermais, where, at a depth of four or five feet, there have been unearthed many Roman coins, wine-jars, handmills, household implements, and personal decorations, as well as gravestones bearing in the Latin tongue pathetic farewells to the loved and lost. One cannot, therefore, doubt that many of the villas and châteaux which now adorn the slopes of Obermais stand upon sites once occupied by Roman residences.

In the days of the Cæsars this settlement bore the musical name of Maia, which now unfortunately has assumed the less euphonious form of Mais, bestowed upon the suburbs Obermais and Untermais. Why the name Maia was originally given is not definitely known; but it may well have been connected with the Roman goddess, Maia, who was associated with the month of blossoms, and who might naturally be thought to have endowed this Alpine pocket of perennial sunshine with an exceptional wealth of floral beauty and fertility. In the great downfall of imperial Rome this military station and its settlement were drawn into that dreadful gulf of ruin and obscurity, as boats are sucked into the vortex of the sinking ship. Indeed, so utterly do they vanish for a time, that many have supposed

A RIVULET IN OBERMAIS.

them to have been destroyed by some tremendous overflow of the treacherous stream that issues from the ominous Mount Ifinger. But, although serious devastation has at times been caused thus, it is more probable that Maia was temporarily trampled out of sight by the wild hordes which, as the empire tottered to its fall, rushed through this valley from the north, to overrun the treasure-house of art and luxury embraced within the shores of Italy. Then followed a long interval of semi-barbarism, the history of which is lost in gloom, relieved occasionally by a lurid flash, caused by some sanguinary struggle or deed of individual daring. At last, however, the importance of this meeting-point of three great valleys, uniting Austria, Italy, and Switzerland, was again perceived, and the old Roman station, so long

"Left by the stream whose waves are years,"

A BIT OF THE PASSEIER THAL.

once more emerged from its obscurity under the warlike name of "Castrum Majense."

It is a curious fact that we are indebted for the earliest documentary proofs and descriptions of this fortified, mediæval town, not to a warrior, but a saint; and still more singularly, to one whose name is commonly

associated merely with sentiments of love, — Saint Valentine. Little I thought when, as a child, I sent out and received on the fourteenth of February poetical effusions inscribed on cards adorned with two gilt hearts transfixed with Cupid's arrow, that I should ever live in a place historically connected with Saint Valentine. Perhaps I should, however, immediately distinguish which St. Valentine; for in the history of the Church

ST. VALENTINE'S CHURCH.

two holy men have borne this name. The first was put to death at Rome about the year 270 A.D., while the second died here at Meran, two centuries later, almost contemporaneously with the downfall of the imperial city. It is the latter only who concerns us; since he it was, who, in the early part of the fifth century, came to the Tyrōl and preached the gospel to its pagan population.

According to a mediæval writer, this Christian apostle built, in his old age, at a little distance from Meran, and "far from the tumult of mankind," a chapel, where he passed his closing years, and finally died, bequeathing to posterity the benediction of his saintly life. This last abode and burial-place of the Tyrolese missionary has been from time immemorial identified

INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH.

with the little Church of St. Valentine, hidden away upon the southern slope of Obermais, in a romantic corner of the Meran valley. Hence it has been for fourteen hundred years a place of pilgrimage, and is believed by some authorities to be the oldest pilgrim-shrine in Germany. Though its exterior is plain, the modest sanctuary has, within, two paintings of exceptional

beauty. Moreover, its situation is idyllic. Sheltered from winds and storms by the encircling hills, its venerable walls bask in the mellow sunshine as an old man warms his limbs before the fire; and in the spring, its time-worn spire seems rejuvenated, as it looks southward over miles of blossoming orchards and luxuriant vineyards toward the gate of Italy. About the middle of the eighth century this shrine lost much of its importance through the removal of St. Valentine's body to Passau on the Danube, where it now reposes; and there, in 1120, was found in his coffin a memorial tablet which had been placed there nearly seven hundred years before, at his first burial at Maia, and which contained clear references to his life and labor here. In fact, so prominent is the part played by this holy man in Meran's early history, that the existence of any other saint of the name of Valentine is practically unknown and almost resented in the Tyrōl.

A TYROLESE MAIDEN.

ST. VALENTINE'S CHURCH, FROM THE MOUNTAIN.

A TYROLESE PEASANT.

This ignorance concerning the first St. Valentine is the more surprising, because for many centuries a service has been regularly celebrated here on the fourteenth of February, — the anniversary of his death. The probable explanation of the circumstance is the fact that the Tyrolese saint was born on what was already called St. Valentine's Day, and that he received on that account the name of his patron, — Valentine. In time, however, his fame in the Tyrōl eclipsed the memory of his predecessor, much as a brilliant planet casts into comparative obscurity a greater but more distant star. Accordingly, though the fourteenth of February really commemorates the martyrdom of one saint and the birth of the other, it now recalls to the Tyrolese

ST. VALENTINER HOF.

only their local hero, and not the man for whom the day was originally named.

Such thoughts occurred to me on the fourteenth of last February, when seated near St. Valentine's Church in a sheltered nook of peace and beauty, called St. Valentiner Hof. For centuries this curious old building, clinging to the hillside, was the home of powerful and well-born Tyrolese; but it is now merely a modest restaurant, where visitors from Meran are fond of drinking afternoon-coffee, either on the terrace, or in its glass-enclosed veranda, flooded with Tyrolean sunshine. Here, on the saint's day, as the music of the service floated toward me from the church, there blended beautifully with the deep tones of the organ and

A WEDDING AT ST. VALENTINE'S.

the voices of the choir the notes of feathered songsters, wheeling gracefully around the old gray spire, as if even they were influenced by the anniversary, and were confirming the poetic legend (old as Chaucer's time), — that on St. Valentine's Day birds choose their mates. Strange, is it not? that, though the interchange of valentines was practiced by the pagans, and though the association of the custom with St. Valentine was purely accidental, yet here, as everywhere in Christendom, the

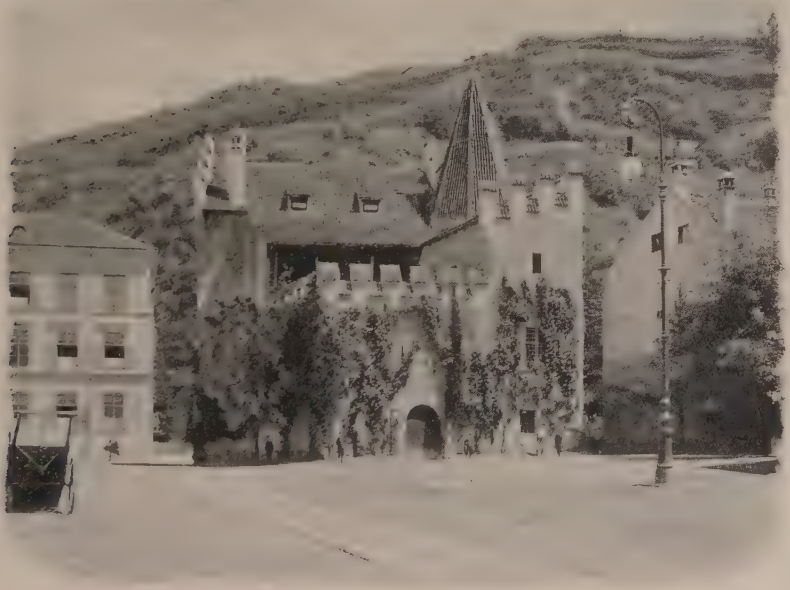
MERAN IN SUMMER.

saint's name still suggests a tender sentiment; and even into this tiny corner of the Alps, where the Tyrolese anchorite built his hermit cell, eddies a portion of that universal flood of human passion, which more than aught else in the world decides the destiny of every soul, and bears mankind mysteriously on its bosom, some to soft airs and islands of the blest, others to shipwreck and despair. In fact, St. Valentine's Church has always been so great a favorite with the residents of this

THE KUR-HAUS, MERAN.

vicinity for the celebration of their marriages, that thousands of proud grooms and blushing brides have gone forth from its door to found new homes, and lighten life's hard labor with the smile of love. Nor is this custom limited to the peasants; for the rich and aristocratic also — notably in the month of May — often select St. Valentine's for the consecration of their nuptials.

In the heart of old Meran stands a peculiar looking structure, so small and yet so massive in appearance, as to suggest the monster strong-box of some mediæval millionaire. It occupies the centre of a little square, much as a solitary boulder might appear, if it had fallen thither from the neighboring mountain. On three sides, buildings frame the open space enclosing it; while, on the fourth, rise almost perpendicularly, in the rear, the sunny, vineyard-terraced cliffs of the Küchelberg, up which ascends in carefully protected zigzags the admirably built Tappeiner Way. Scores of pedestrians pass this time-worn edifice daily, as they go to or return from that most popular promenade; but scarcely any one halts before it, or seems to



THE PRINCE'S CASTLE, MERAN.

consider it worth a visit. Yet, as the residence of several distinguished personages, it has played a prominent part in Tyrolese history, and has a special interest for English-speaking travelers from its associations with a Scottish princess. James I. of Scotland was, for his time, a man of rare accomplishments.

THE BEDROOM.

He knew both French and Latin, admired Chaucer and other early English bards, and had himself composed such excellent verses that he was called the "Poet King." At the age of thirty he married the beautiful Lady Jane Beaufort, whom in his love and admiration he called his "milk-white dove."

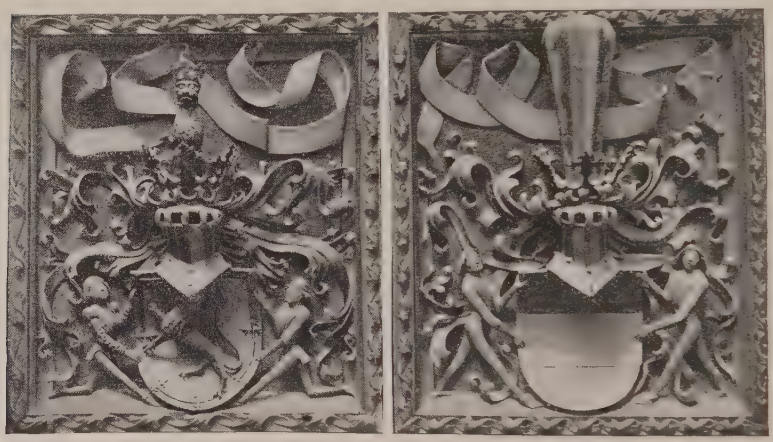
It was a daughter of this gifted king and lovely queen, — the princess Eleanor, — who in September, 1448, became betrothed to the Archduke Sigmund, lord of the Tyrōl; and early in the following year she came to live here as his bride. One naturally wonders how this marriage came about between a princess of a tiny, turbulent kingdom of the distant north, and the ruler of this principality on the edge of Italy. It is, how-

ever, easily explained. Margaret, the eldest daughter of James I., had married, in 1435, the Dauphin of France, afterward Louis XI. Accordingly, after the murder of her father and the death of her mother, Eleanor was naturally sent for protection to her sister at the French Court. Misfortune seemed, however, to pursue her; for, on arriving in France, Eleanor found her sister dead. Nevertheless Charles VII. received her kindly, and wished at first that she should replace Margaret as the Dauphin's wife. But as it was impossible to obtain the Pope's consent to such a union, the king arranged the match between the princess and the Archduke Sigmund; and an extant letter from James II. of Scotland thanks Charles VII. for his outlay connected with this matrimonial alliance, to which, as Eleanor's brother, he gives his hearty consent. Although she had come so near being Queen of France, Eleanor seems to have been contented with her humbler lot, and the young couple were happy and well mated. The bride inherited her father's taste for literature, and was herself a clever writer, translating into German from the French a novel, which she dedicated to her husband. The arch-

IN THE AUDIENCE ROOM OF THE CASTLE.

duke, too, possessed remarkable artistic tastes, and personally was a handsome man, with so much strength and agility that he could vanquish in the sport of wrestling the most athletic men of the Tyrōl. After his marriage he began at once the building of this little castle, which we may therefore look upon as a wedding present to his bride.

We can imagine with what pride and pleasure the newly married pair watched the construction of their nest. No doubt the woman's taste was exercised in much of its design and decoration; and possibly she may have suggested the conical red tower which, set so jauntily on one side of the tiled roof, re-



THE ARMS OF SCOTLAND AND HAPSBURG IN THE CASTLE.

lieves the heaviness of the sombre walls. Within are several old-time portraits and armorial bearings, among which are conspicuous the royal arms of Scotland. Quaint tables, wardrobes, chests, and chairs, and in particular a Gothic bedstead, quite elaborately carved, recall to us the life of those old times. Especially conspicuous is a porcelain stove of green tiles, said to have been made for Sigmund as a work of art then rarely seen. In fact, under the patronage of this ruler, art reached its highest point in the Tyrōl. Some of the noblest Gothic churches in the

KING ARTHUR OF ENGLAND, ONE OF THE STATUES SURROUNDING MAXIMILIAN'S TOMB.

A CORNER OF THE CASTLE.

land were built or finished by his order, and many castles and other prominent structures, such as "Sigmundskron," near Botzen, still perpetuate his name.

Subsequent to the reign of Sigmund and Eleanor there came at intervals other royal personages to this tiny burg, the most illustrious of whom was the Emperor Maximilian I., whose tomb in Innsbruck — a masterpiece in bronze, surrounded by magnificent statues of the same material — is one of the most remarkable sights in Austria. But after the removal of the capital from Meran to Innsbruck, this castle became more and more neglected, until it narrowly escaped destruction, in 1876, when its site was coveted for the erection of a schoolhouse. Through the exertions of some lovers of antiquity, this danger was averted; and, thanks to the generosity of hundreds of contributors, the princely residence has been restored to practically the same condition in which it stood at the time of its founder, four hundred and fifty years ago. However it may be with other visitors who stand among the vineyards of the Küchel-

berg, and look down on this small but proud memorial of former days, when I behold it, all other personalities connected with its history fade away, and I think only of the handsome Sigmund and his Scottish bride who, long before Columbus sailed for the New World, built here their home of youthful happiness and love. Nor can I doubt that from its oriel window they often watched the rays of the declining sun sparkle upon the snow-

SIGMUNDSKRON SCHLOSS, NEAR BOZEN.

capped summits of these same unchanging mountains, which, as I write these words, I too behold still glittering in their immemorial splendor.

Standing upon the very brink of the precipitous hill that overlooks the town, the most conspicuous object in the immediate neighborhood of Meran is a square, crenellated tower, called the Pulverthurm. Its site commands a glorious view; and, as a gently graded path deprives the ascent to it of any

difficulty, the spot is daily visited by scores of people. Although this was erected in the thirteenth century, the place had evidently been well fortified from earliest times; for the exterior of the structure is a stout, mediæval shell, with walls five feet in thickness, enclosing a smaller watch tower, probably of Roman origin. Hence, as it stands to-day, the Pulverthurm may be regarded as a striking representative of Meran in the three

THE PULVERTHURM.

principal periods of its development. The tower's ancient nucleus, or core, hidden from all save those who scientifically search for it, corresponds to the era of the Romans; its outer walls, so massive, yet unsuited to the present age, suggest the centuries of Castrum Majense; while the elaborately built and fashionable promenade which leads to and surrounds it, is typical of the modern epoch of Meran, when this gray tower looks down no longer upon Roman legionaries or mailèd knights of Christen-

THE APPROACH TO THE PULVERTHURM.

dom, but on a polyglot company of men and women, the great diversity of whose speech might now appropriately give to it the title of the Tower of Babel. At all events, whatever Meran may have been in St. Valentine's or Sigmund's time, the Pulverthurm has never seen it in so prosperous a condition as to-day.

"Hitch your wagon to a star," says Emerson; in other words, — Join forces with the powers of Nature, and let them draw you on to fortune. Meran has improved upon this precept by hitching its wagon to the sun. Apollo is its tutelary deity, with Bacchus as his coadjutor. About fifteen thousand strangers, — most of them fugitives from Boreas, — come here every year; some of them migrating to Meran at the approach of frost, as regularly as the storks to Egypt. Such is the cosmopolitan character of the place that one can hardly realize that it forms a part of any special nationality. Like Baden-Baden, Nice, and many other resorts, frequented by the entire

world because of their romantic scenery or health-restoring springs, it seems the common property of humanity. Its inhabitants are international. Thus, at a single concert I have seen here Germans, Austrians, Hungarians, English, Americans, Finns, Italians, Russians, Turks, and even Japanese. Nor are these always birds of passage. Sometimes the birds build nests here;

THE HOTEL MERANERHOF, MERAN.

particularly on the sunny slopes of Obermais, where one finds little else to-day than acres upon acres of arcaded vineyards, among which rise a number of historic castles (suitably transformed to meet all modern requirements), and scores of pretty villas, each with its own garden, and usually built in such a way as to secure for all the "living rooms" and balconies the maximum of solar warmth.

The occupants of these châteaux and villas are representative of many lands. The author's home, for example, was built by a Russian, who called it the Villa Baltica; its second owner

was a Brazilian, who named it after a town near Rio Janeiro; while over the garden of its third and latest possessor float the Stars and Stripes. One of his neighbors was for twenty years a tea merchant in Yokohama. Another is the former minister of Germany to Mexico. Not far away, in a delightful situation, stands the Villa Colorado, built and occupied by two American ladies from Denver; while in another charmingly retired home has lived for many years a lady born in Boston. These residents are not invalids. Although in perfect health, they choose to live in this enchanting spot, chiefly because of its warm sun, magnificent scenery, and bracing air. Some have retired to this vine-girt valley because they have grown weary of the whirl and strife of the great, money-seeking world, and wish for quiet and

SCHLOSS LABERS, OBERMAIS.

repose; others, because they here enjoy a freedom from the bondage of "Society," whereas at home a round of social functions would inevitably fetter them with gilded chains; and others still there are, who crave an opportunity to live thus face to face with Nature in some of her most fascinating aspects, and amid such inspiring surroundings to stimulate their minds with what the wittiest and wisest of mankind have written, and in the laboratory of intellectual research slowly to distill the essence of their thought.

VILLA COLORADO, OBERMAIS.

A life of leisure need not be a life of laziness. Montaigne has truly said, "It is not merely possessing, but enjoying, that makes us happy." But how many possessors of fine libraries find opportunity to use them amid a city's feverish excitement

TYROLESE HORSES.

SCHLOSS RUBEIN, OBERMAIS.

and engrossing toil? To every thoughtful soul there comes a time when the inevitable end of life presents itself as an approaching certainty. However remote it may appear under favorable conditions, the distance to life's terminus can be approximately measured. If he who thus confronts the afternoon of life be wise, he will reflect that all he can enjoy from Nature and the literary treasures of the past must be obtained in these few intervening years. Thrice happy, then, is he who can in time enshrine his household gods within some peaceful paradise, where, with the constant inspiration of majestic mountains or the sea, and in the company of one or more congenial souls, he may no longer quote each day to his remorseful heart the sad reproach of Wordsworth: —

> "The world is too much with us; late and soon,
> Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
> Little we see in Nature that is ours."

MONUMENT TO DR. TAPPEINER.

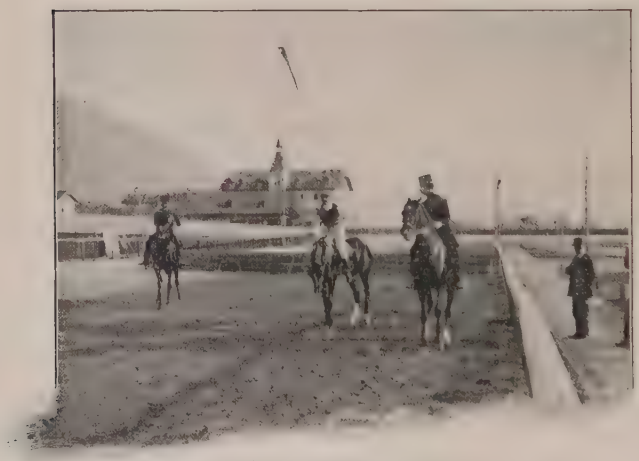
More practical reasons, also, may influence the choice of those who settle in Meran. Its nearness to Vienna, Munich, Venice, and Milan of course increases its attractiveness; while it must be remembered that a European health resort offers special advantages to permanent, as well as transient, guests. In a large foreign city one feels himself a solitary unit in a multitude; uncared for, unobserved, and left to find his happiness as best he can amid a bustling, unsympathetic crowd. But

COURTYARD OF SCHLOSS RUBEIN.

in an Austrian or German "Kur-Ort" a Managing Committee is all the time employing money, tact, and ingenuity for the sole purpose of embellishing the place, and making it healthful and agreeable to all residents. Thus, in Meran a handsome, level promenade, with a full southern exposure, has been constructed for a mile and a half along the river bank. A winding path has also been, at great expense, built up with massive masonry and iron railings

A BIT OF THE TAPPEINER WAY.

on the cliffs that overlook the town; and this is so scientifically made, and has such easy grades, that invalids in roll-chairs can be comfortably wheeled to all its points of observation. This favorite walk is called, appropriately, the Tappeiner Way, in honor of its promoter, Dr. Tappeiner, whose bust adorns the summit of the route, and to whose liberality the town is much indebted. A good stock-company is also every year engaged for Meran's dainty theatre, where operettas alternate with plays. A public reading-room is furnished with many of the prominent journals of the world. Open-air concerts are given



IN THE SPORT-PLATZ, MERAN.

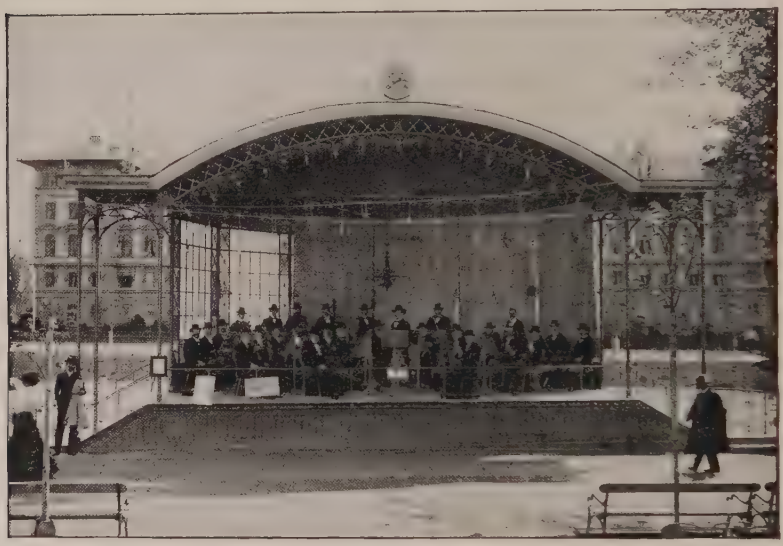
twice daily by a talented orchestra; and famous musical artists, some of whom have made successful tours in America, are brought here during the season. Another attractive feature is the "International Sport-Platz," where a circular track, a mile and a half in length, gives ample space for bicycling and racing. Here lovers of athletic sports find good facilities for football, hockey, cricket, tennis, and croquet; and a broad, carefully flooded field of ice, kept smooth as glass, affords a splendid opportunity for skating. Balls, too, take place at stated intervals; and harvest festivals, fruit displays, confetti conflicts, military concerts, and out-of-door dramatic performances are given through the year, as evidences of a system that aims to make the sojourn here of every guest both beneficial and agreeable.

A STREET IN MERAN.

A FLOWER CORSO IN THE SPORT-PLATZ, MERAN.

Of all these forms of entertainment the one which gives undoubtedly the greatest

amount of pleasure to the largest number is the music of the "Kur-Kapelle" — an orchestra of twenty-nine musicians, some of whom well deserve the name of artists. As they are usually reëngaged season after season, they have the advantage of knowing one another's style, and consequently play together with great precision. A proof of the excellence of their music is the fact that, nearly every day last winter, I saw, both at their open-air performances and at their more elaborate sym-



THE ORCHESTRA AT MERAN.

phony and chamber concerts, the noble and expressive face of Mr. Carl Zerrahn, who wore his crown of silvered hair with grace and dignity, as he sat listening in the sunshine; musing perhaps on his own triumphs in the United States, where during more than forty years he was the director of the famous Handel and Haydn Society, and achieved a series of successes which form a prominent part of the musical history of America. The great rôle played by the sun in the cure and comfort of all visitors to Meran is seen in the fact that the hours chosen

for these daily concerts are regulated by the strength of the solar rays. Thus, in the winter, the band plays usually from half-past ten to twelve; and in the afternoon from half-past one to three. Even the places for the music vary, according to the weather, from the sun-bathed, open shore of the Passer in front of the Kur-Haus, to a sheltered gallery, farther up the river, called the Wandelhalle. On the few very cold or stormy days, when sitting out of doors is not advisable, the band is heard in the comfortable music hall of the Casino. All these details are mentioned, not with the purpose of furnishing a manual for visitors to Meran, but as an illustration of how in European health resorts the happiness and welfare of their guests are studied and promoted. A still more practical proof of this is the rule that during the concerts no smoking is permitted on the promenade; and even the habit, indulged in by some ladies, of dragging their skirts along the walks is absolutely

A PORTION OF THE WANDELHALLE.

forbidden, the prohibition being firmly but politely enforced by a policeman.

Yet, unlike many rendezvous for invalids, the quest for health is not too much in evidence in Meran. Here, for example, is no boiling spring, around which, as at Carlsbad, Ems, and numerous other resorts, the patients gather at a certain hour to drink their regular doses. The curative agents here are principally pure air, glorious sunshine, and delicious grapes. Meran

ON THE PROMENADE, MERAN.

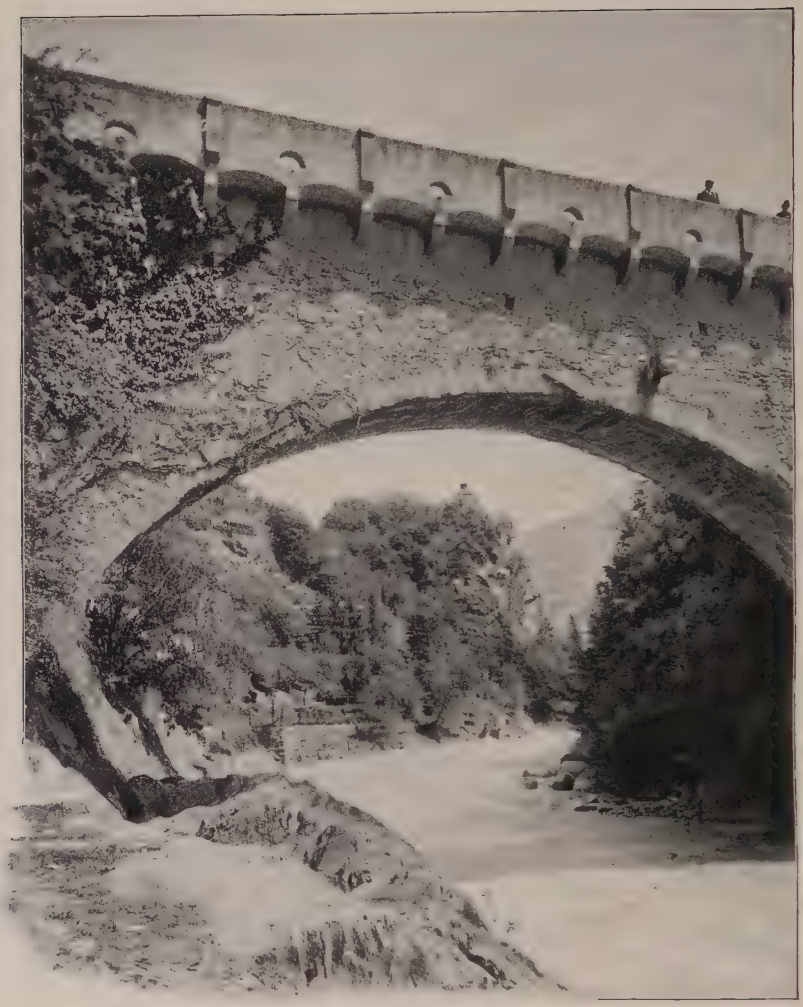
is not a place prescribed for the seriously ill. Only a few of those who come here to be cured are incapacitated for exercise or pleasure. The great majority have been advised merely to shun the rigors of a northern winter, without, however, going to a climate as relaxing as that of Sicily or the Riviera. Hence, pilgrims to Meran are veritable sun worshipers; and certain sheltered, southward-facing nooks are visited by hundreds, who stroll about, take

coffee on the terraces, read, listen to music, play at fancy work, or are content for a few hours simply to bask, like lizards, in their chairs, absorbing the warm solar rays, though snow and ice may fringe meantime the opposite river bank, dark with shadow.

The favorite place for quiet walks and sun baths is the Gilf Promenade, beginning at the massive bridge of stone which spans the Passer in one mighty arch. This is a terraced walk,

THE GILF PROMENADE.

constructed on the cliffs of a wild gorge, through which the clear, green river cuts its way with flood and foam between the hill of Obermais, on one side, and, on the other, the almost perpendicular Zenoberg. It is so thoroughly sheltered and inundated with sunshine that it resembles an open-air conservatory; for on the bank of the stream, and bordering the ascending paths, are many species of exotic trees and exquisitely scented shrubs,



THE ZENOBERG, SEEN THROUGH THE STONE BRIDGE.

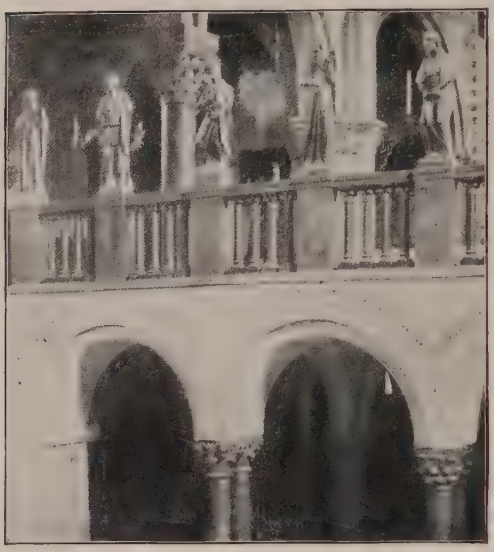
besides a great profusion of ivy and Virginia creeper, covering the natural rocks and walls of masonry, in summer with luxuriant green, in autumn with magnificently colored tapestries of variegated foliage.

The rugged Zenoberg is, from this point especially, a striking

PORTAL OF ST. ZENO'S CHAPEL, MERAN.

object in the landscape; and, forming as it does a natural barrier between Meran and the Passeier Thal, has occupied as prominent a place in the history of the town as it still does in its topography. The grand old rock now wears with melancholy pride only a broken coronet of ruined walls and towers; but these give ample proof that, centuries ago, it bore upon its crest those two essential architectural features of every mediæval settlement of any size, — a church and castle. Such buildings usually stood on separate heights; but here the lion and the lamb lay down together. Whether the original church was founded by St. Valentine, and was dedicated to him, is still a matter of dispute; but there is no doubt whatever that it was known in the Middle Ages as the Church of St. Zeno, and has given to the hill its name.

If this St. Zeno does not enjoy a world-wide reputation, it has not been the fault of local admirers. Like the apostle for whom the great basilica at Rome is named, St. Zeno was at first a fisherman, and subsequently rose to be the Bishop of Verona, as St. Peter had been Bishop of Rome. One sees, indeed, to-day in the former city the finest Romanesque church in northern Italy, which was erected to St. Zeno in the twelfth century, and



THE CRYPT OF ST. ZENO'S CHURCH.

in the crypt of which is the bishop's tomb. St. Zeno's fame spread naturally from Verona to Meran, where his popularity is easily comprehended from the fact that he was believed to be very efficacious in averting river floods, — a virtue which commended itself particularly to the people of this valley, on whom the inundations of the Naif and Passer often brought incalculable loss and misery. Accordingly, a chapel was constructed in his honor upon the very brink of the steep cliffs that overhang the wild ravine, through which the Passer sometimes rages with a fury formerly uncontrollable. The curiously sculptured portal of this chapel is, in fact, one of the oldest architectural relics that exist in the Tyrōl.

For some mysterious reason, however, St. Zeno seemed to accomplish little for Meran, and his prestige and popularity diminished. Perhaps if the town had suffered less from inundations, the sanctuary of the saint would not have been allowed to crumble to decay. As for the castle, it is renowned as having been one of the earliest residences of the Tyrolese counts, and was especially prominent in the fourteenth century, as the favorite abode of the pleasure-loving Heinrich, father of the famous Margaret Maultasch, of whose adventurous life we shall find many interesting traces when we arrive at Schloss Tyrōl.

ALONG THE PASSER.

Among the most conspicuous and, in the right season, beautiful features of the Meran valley are its vineyards. Unlike the vineries of Switzerland and the Rhine, where myriads of upright poles stand stiffly on the hillsides, adorned with somewhat scanty evidences of the gifts of Bacchus, the South Tyrolean vineyards climb the mountain sides in a vast series of arcades, made out of rustic porticos, or skeleton sheds, of which the only covering is the foliage of the vine. The practical result of this arrangement is that the grapes, spread out upon square miles of mammoth frames, receive an immense amount of light and heat.

IN A MERAN VINEYARD.

Artistically, this mode of viticulture is enchanting; since all the mountain flanks are mantled with a labyrinth of grape arbors, presenting to the passer-by innumerable leafy avenues, from whose green roofs hang presently those white or purple clusters of imprisoned sunshine, destined to turn to drops of sweetness

ARCADED VINEYARDS RANGED IN TERRACES.

on the lips of men.

In May one lives here in a region of surpassing loveliness. Aside from a profusion of the choicest roses, the blossoming vines themselves perfume the entire region with a subtile odor, which seems a delicate blending of violet and mignonette, combined with a faint trace of new-mown hay. One can then literally walk for miles within these corridors of scented bloom, and scarcely ever lose the sound of rippling streams. Some of these vine-roofed galleries are made to serve a double purpose, since in them most of the vegetables cultivated here are planted. The solar rays, falling directly on the plants, would either burn them or produce too forced a growth; hence the

A CORRIDOR OF SCENTED BLOOM

broad grape leaves bear the brunt of the first fiery lances of the sun, which, when they reach the undergrowth below, are bent and harmless. As the season advances, the beauty of these Tyrolese vineyards is enhanced by the repeated spraying of their foliage with copperas water, which gives to it a rich, metallic hue of bluish green.

But it is in the autumn that their glory is especially apparent; for then, at the approach of frost, this forest of innumerable

SCHLOSS LEBENBURG AND ITS VINEYARDS IN WINTER.

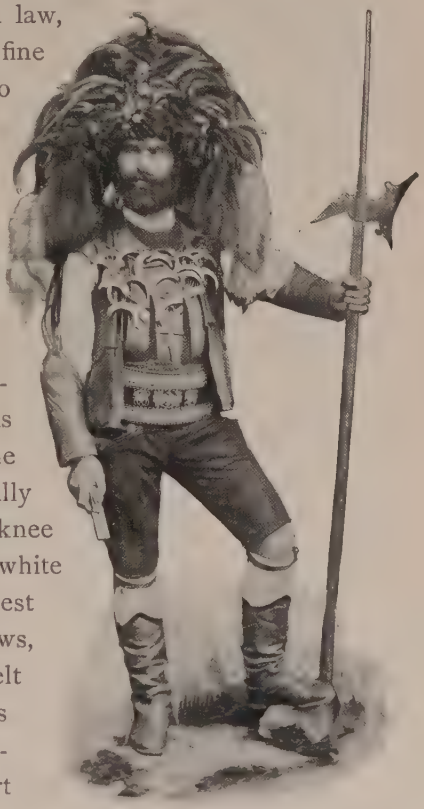
vine leaves glows with brilliant colors, till the ascending terraces suggest superbly cushioned seats in a gigantic amphitheatre, or broad cascades of molten gold, descending silently from some celestial treasury. In looking on such scenes, and then, above them, at the pure, white snow, which often at the vintage time already crowns the summits piercing the serene and cloudless sky, one's heart responds to their suggestions of the infinite, as an Æolian harp, touched by a breath of heaven, thrills with the

A CONTEMPLATIVE SALTNER.

divinest chords. A few weeks later, when the luscious grapes are gathered, and the leaves have fallen, and the glory of the vineland has departed, these trellised corridors look gray and bare. Yet, even in winter, they at times regain a transitory loveliness, hardly less alluring than their autumn splendor. This happens when their forms are outlined in the dazzling whiteness of new-fallen snow. Then every shaft is so bedecked with the soft element, that the unlovely galleries of yesterday are transformed into porticos of crystal, beautiful beyond description, as they rise, tier on tier, and terrace above terrace, and bind the mountain sides with silver chains. At such a time, when night draws on, the atmosphere seems filled with powdered pearls, through which the lights of happy households gleam like jewels. Meanwhile, innumerable evergreens, in soft, white wrappings, stand like richly laden Christmas trees; and, on the surrounding hills, the boughs of countless pines and firs, bending beneath their spotless burden, suggest half-folded wings, as if a heavenly

host had just alighted, to gaze in silence on a scene of more than earthly beauty.

Since in the earliest paradise on record poor human nature found the plucking of forbidden fruit an irresistible temptation, it is not strange that in this paradise of the Tyrōl the vineyards have to be protected by custodians. These watchmen, known as "Saltners," live for a month or more preceding vintage in cabins hidden away in shady corners of the long arcades. Their food is brought to them by the peasants, and they are supposed to roam about all night, to guard the ripening grapes; but even by day they always seem to be awake and active, eager to find an innocent tourist trespassing unawares on their domain. For then, in accordance with an unwritten law, they are entitled to exact a trifling fine from the intruder. Of course they do this usually under the pretext of soliciting tobacco; and churlish would the stranger be who, amid such surroundings, should refuse a few "tabac-kreutzers" to these poorly paid defenders of the fruit upon whose sale so much of the prosperity of South Tyrōl depends. Nevertheless, the costume of the Saltner is startling enough to cause at first some apprehensions. He wears a fancifully decorated leathern jacket, and short knee breeches, between which and his low, white socks the legs are bare. Upon his chest hang rows of wild boar's teeth and claws, and not only does his embroidered belt contain a knife and pistol, but in his hand is usually held a formidable looking spear. The most marvelous part

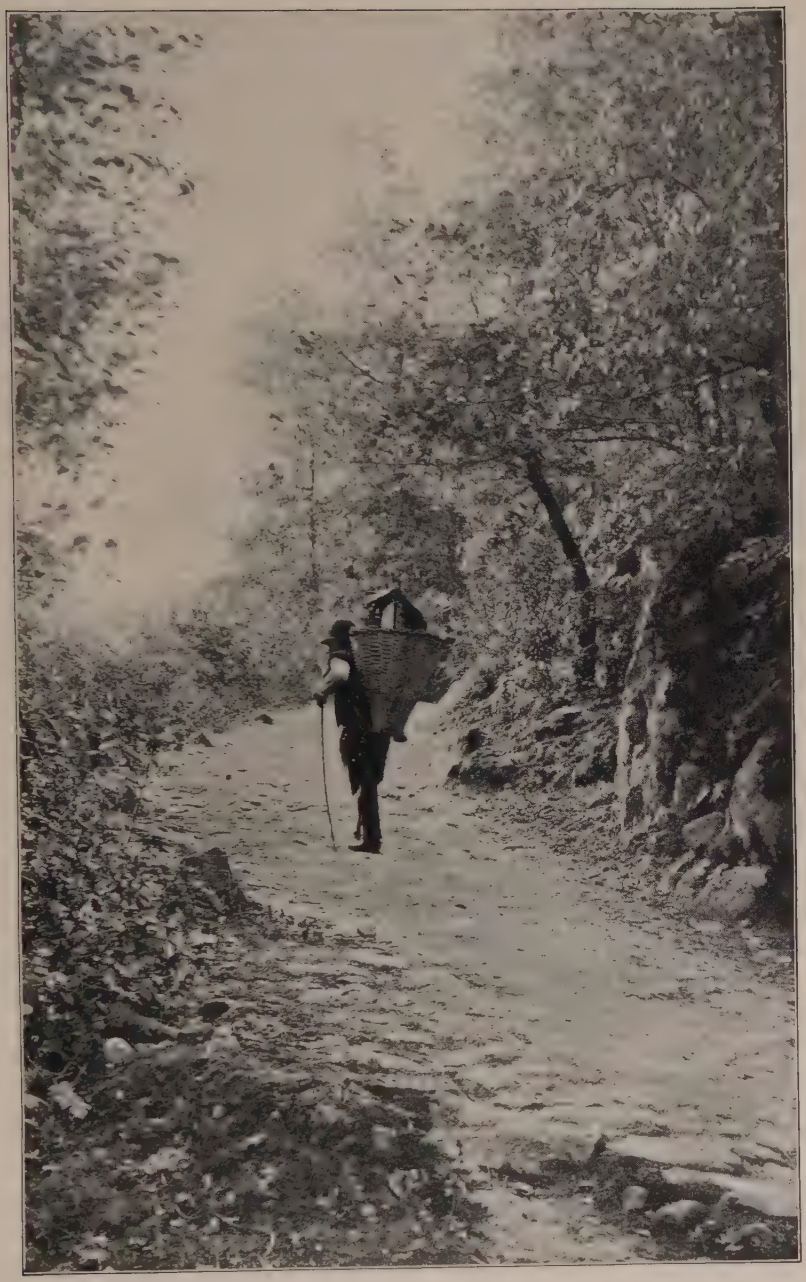


A SALTNER.

of the Saltner's wardrobe is, however, his hat, which certainly must rank among the most extraordinary head gears of humanity. Its basis is a form resembling the characteristic three-cornered chapeau of Napoleon; but on this is built up a sort of grotesque mound, composed of multicolored plumes and feathers, interspersed with tufts of fur, while bushy foxtails hang down over either ear, like monster curls.

A FRUIT MARKET IN SOUTH TYRŌL.

The Saltner's work ends, naturally, with the vintage. Then every hillside is alive with happy toilers. Scattered through miles of leafy labyrinths, a multitude of men, women, and children work from dawn to dusk, and often far into the night, when the land is white with the splendor of the moon. Through long arcades, whose roofs are green and gold, with purple pendants, sturdy young men and smiling maidens come and go, sometimes exchanging tender glances over the baskets held between them,



A TYROLESE PEASANT WITH SHOULDER BASKET.

heaped with the mounds of fragrant grapes, upon which rests a bloom as soft and beautiful as that which clothes the mountains with their amethystine veils. A thousand shapely arms are lifted toward the glowing clusters, which nimble fingers cut and deftly lay in trays held up by patient children, proud to contribute some assistance to the great harvest of their native hills. Meanwhile, the men are kneeling on the ground, engaged in packing some of the grapes for immediate exportation in wicker crates made specially for the purpose. Here and there also, in corners of the vineyards, are seated older women, weaving straw covers for these crates, and fastening them securely over the cool, moist fruit. How delicately they handle the sweet-scented bunches! How carefully they place them side by side, and pile them up, until they look like mounds of purple flowers! The grapes designed for wine-making, however, are dropped into enormous wicker cornucopias, which other laborers straightway buckle to their backs by means of shoulder straps, and carry off to vats, where the rich, juicy masses undergo the usual processes of crushing and fermentation.

AN APPLE TREE IN OBERMAIS.

The quality of wine produced by these Tyrolean vineyards has been appreciated for two thousand years. The Romans paid great attention to the cultivation of the grape here; and the light, stealing through the glasses which contained the

A BUNCH OF MERAN APPLES.

precious produce of these sun-steeped slopes, illumined frequently with ruby or with amber tints the napery of the imperial table on the Palatine. The Emperor Augustus is said to have preferred the wine of the Tyrōl to any other.

But grapes are not the only product of these valleys. Pomona almost rivals Bacchus here. Apples and pears grown near Meran are regularly sent to various parts of Europe, and as long ago as 1702 supplied the emperor's household at Vienna. Yet, like all apples grown in milder climates, the South Tyrolean apples lack the luscious flavor, body, and aroma of America's finest Baldwins, Greenings, and other well-known varieties; and this fact has confirmed an opinion long held by the author, that nowhere in the world is there so rich and varied a supply of almost every edible, from meats to sea food, and from cereals to fruits, as in the United States.

APPLE TREES TRAINED ON WIRES.

The way in which apples and pears are cultivated in the Tyrōl astonishes the foreigner. The "trees," if such they may be called, are pruned and trained to grow on wires like tomato plants in America, quantity being in this way sacrificed to quality. Some are no more than a foot and a half in height; others are eight or ten feet high, with rows of branches stretched out at right angles from the trunk, like multiple arms of a cross, rising in parallel lines one above another. This fashion is

OVER THE GARDEN WALL; A STUDY IN ROSES.

not, however, universal; for one beholds occasionally enormous pear and apple trees, which would elicit praise from even New York and Ohio farmers; and I have eaten some apples grown in the Tyrōl, worthy of being placed, according to the ancient superstition, in the hands of the dead, that they might have them when they entered paradise.

But lovelier even than her vineries and orchards are the flowers of this valley, of which the queen is certainly the "Meran

Rose." The vines which bear this exquisite florescence grow luxuriantly to a great height, and keep their foliage so clean and bright through the entire winter, — in fact, until the new leaves push their predecessors from the stem, — that they are always beautiful, even when not in bloom. But when, in May, the pointed torches of the buds flame out into superbly tinted cups of perfume, which pour an inexhaustible flood of sweetness on the air, the effect can never be forgotten. The colors of the Meran Rose are as difficult to describe as those of a fire opal, which it, indeed, resembles. For, although at its heart the fundamental hue is apricot, this gradually pales toward its extremities, which in their turn are veined with orange, stained with rose, or fired with scarlet, so that the combination is enchanting. It blooms once only in the year, from the end of April to the first of June; but during that time it is so luxuriant that the walls of houses fortunate enough to be embellished with its sumptuous tapestry suggest in miniature the splendor of innumerable sunsets. When, as is frequently the case, these rose vines stand in the form of trees, the densely flowering pyramids that crown the slender trunks burn

TRIMMING MERAN ROSES.

like bright altar fires, lit in honor of the sun god. One sometimes fancies them a metamorphosis of the extinguished fires in the vanished temple of Diana. The list of roses in the world is long and varied; but whether its wonderful hues are due to its imbibing from the soil the ruddy lifeblood of the grape, or to its capture and retention of Tyrolean sunshine, the Meran Rose is certainly unique.

"EACH PATH ITS WAYSIDE SHRINE."

The Tyrolese are thoroughly religious. Of this fact even the passing tourist sees ample proof, not merely in the number of their churches, convents, fast days, and religious services, but in those simpler incidents of daily life which indicate the depth of their convictions. The purely ecclesiastical side of a religion may, or may not, express the hold it has upon the people. Magnificent temples, solemn chants, and richly mantled celebrants, — whether the Deity addressed be Buddha, Christ, or Allah, — may all exist, as decorations of a shell, from which the pearl of faith has disappeared. These indicate the power of the priesthood; but the sincerity and depth of popular devotion is best measured by the spontaneous, *un*ecclesiastical actions of the masses.

Such actions, too, like all which spring from individual volition, free from superior orders or suggestions, are almost always

natural and picturesque. Thus the Mohammedan, kneeling on the desert, and — all unconscious of observers — praying to the Infinite beneath the boundless dome of space, is one of the most impressive of religious sights. It is a genuine act of worship, as natural as breathing, as unobtrusive as a sigh. Not less

CRUCIFIX ON THE PARISH CHURCH, MERAN.

sincere and touching are some of the popular expressions of religious faith among the Tyrolese.

> At midday and at sunset, when through the crystal air
> The tones of silver-throated bells are calling men to prayer,
> They halt at once, bareheaded, with quiet, reverent mien,
> Each figure adding interest and pathos to the scene.
>
> Each vineyard has its crucifix, each path its wayside shrine,
> Where flowers adorn the Virgin's brow, and crown the Child divine;
> And few will pass those sacred spots without a lifted eye,
> A crossing of the weary breast, a prayer, — at least a sigh.

The statement of these lines is literally true. One cannot walk or drive an hour in the Tyrōl, without encountering on the hills and in the valleys, along the highways and in narrow paths, a multitude of little shrines, ranging from miniature chapels, bright with flowers, metal ornaments, and lace-fringed altars, to some poor picture of the Child and Virgin, placed above a gateway or hung beneath a gable of a peasant's roof. Equally numerous also, either fastened to the walls or gleaming white among the foliage of the vineyards, are the crucifixes of this land. A few of them are admirable specimens of the art

ONE OF MANY.

PIETY AND FAITH.

of wood-carving, in which the Tyrolese excel; but oftener the representation of the scene of Calvary is primitive and painful. In almost every case, however, the crucifix is sheltered by a wooden frame resembling a diamond-shaped box, from which the cover has been removed. Some of these frames are painted; but most of them are wisely left in the natural wood, which gradually assumes the quiet browns and grays of the dove's breast or the thrush's wings, such as no glistening paint can ever give. Over these often climb caressingly the tender fingers of the ivy, weaving around the figure of the Man of Sorrows a delicate arabesque of green. Before them, as before the rustic altars in Japan, one usually sees some offering. It may be only a single flower, or a bunch of wayside blossoms; but frequently one finds there potted plants and tiny lamps, kept burning by some faithful worshipers.

A CHARACTERISTIC SCENE IN TYRŌL.

Among a people so devout many religious customs still prevail, which had their origin centuries ago. Thus, on the night before Epiphany, in commemoration of the offerings of the Magi to the Child of Bethlehem, the master of a Tyrolese house goes into every room from attic to basement, followed by his family and servants, and fills the dwelling with the pungent smoke of burning incense, a little of the aromatic gum being furnished for this purpose by the church to every applicant, or brought from door to door by those who wish to sell it. While the proprietor carries thus the fragrant incense through the different rooms, his wife writes over every door, and even over the stalls of the cattle in the stable, the initials of the three kings of the Orient, — Melchior, Caspar, and Balthasar. On the Saturday before Easter, large olive branches from Italy, which have been blest by the priests, are brought into the houses, and hung up in the rooms, until their leaves fall off, when they are reverently burned. Upon the mountains the peasants cultivate certain flowers, which have medicinal properties, and are, on that account, brewed and given to the sick; but such is the reverence with which these

A PEASANT'S HOUSE, NEAR MERAN.

are regarded, after they have been blessed by the church, that in a time of danger, such as a severe thunderstorm, the peasants will often rise in the night, and burn a few of them upon their broad, black hearths.

Narrow, of course, the religious vision of these people is, but none can doubt the genuineness of their faith; and few can view without compassion some weary toiler, laying aside a heavy basket from his stooping shoulders, and standing with bowed head and folded hands before the sacred sign of sacrifice or the pathetic emblem of maternal love. One feels that, just as this poor worshiper has temporarily freed his body from its heavy load, he is now seeking to relieve his heart from a still heavier burden, — his share of the inevitable sorrow of humanity.

DEVOUT TYROLEANS.

One of the most enjoyable excursions in the vicinity of

Meran leads up the picturesque Passeier Thal toward the broad-shouldered mountain range, known as the Jaufen, the Mons Jovis of the Romans. The drive of about three hours along the northern bank of the Passer not only offers to the tourist a lengthened panorama of delightful scenery, but brings him finally to a precious object of historic interest, — the birth-place and home of the famous patriot, Andreas Hofer. This hero is to the Tyrolese what Washington is to Americans, and Garibaldi to Italians. Nay, his untimely, tragic end has made him even more beloved, if possible, than they. For Hofer did not live to see the triumph of the cause for which he fought; but perished in the hour of his country's subjugation, having been betrayed by one of his own countrymen, and shot in cold blood by his conquerors. As we

SCHLOSS ROTHENSTEIN, THE PASSEIER THAL, AND THE JAUFEN.

MOUNTAIN HUT WHERE ANDREAS HOFER WAS CAPTURED.

drive through the charming valley made illustrious by his birth and battles, the salient points in his career recur to us, and stamp themselves indelibly upon our memories.

In 1806, when Bonaparte was tracing with his sword new kingdoms on the map of Europe, he stipulated, as one of the results of his great victory at Austerlitz, that the Tyrōl, which for four hundred and fifty years had formed a part of Austria, should be transferred to the possession of his ally, the king of Bavaria. The Tyrolese resented this indignantly. For centuries they had been loyal to the house of Hapsburg; and to be suddenly handed over to the ally of Austria's arch-enemy, Napoleon, seemed to them unbearable. Moreover, their new

ON THE WAY TO HOFER'S HOME.

STATUE IN HOFER'S HOUSE, IN PASSEIER THAL.

master, the Bavarian king, showed tactlessness and folly in his mode of governing them. The constitution which had been the groundwork of their national existence was promptly taken from them, and a new series of laws provided in its place. Heavier taxes were levied, and several highly prized religious privileges were withdrawn. Hardest of all, hundreds of young Tyroleans were forced to join the Bavarian army, and fight against their former emperor and compatriots. The very name, Tyrōl, endeared to them for many generations, was changed, and its use forbidden. Henceforth they were to be known as South Bavarians! Under such circumstances, it was natural that the Tyrolese should plot to rise against their oppressors simultaneously with Austria, whenever the latter felt herself strong enough to make the attempt.

Accordingly, in 1809, when war broke out anew between Napoleon and Franz I., the Tyrolese peasants sprang at once to arms. Andreas Hofer was their leader. Nature had molded him for the part he was to play; for to a figure of unusual strength and size were added iron resolution, dauntless courage, a burning love for the Tyrōl, and a magnetic eloquence that fired his countrymen to deeds of valor. So carefully had he made his preparations, that when the appointed signal came from Austria, he had but to send out through the land the words: "The time has come!" and everywhere the people rose obedient to

his call. The record of what followed forms a thrilling story, far too long to be narrated fully in these pages. Suffice it to say that Andreas Hofer and his heroes crossed the Jaufen from this valley, attacked the enemy in the mountain passes, defeated them completely, and pushing on to Innsbruck, took possession of the capital. In little more than a week ten thousand of their foes had been destroyed or routed, and their loved fatherland was freed from foreigners.

THE LAST CALL TO ARMS

But the end was not yet. Napoleon, enraged at this unlooked-for interruption of his plans, dispatched three armies, to enter the Tyrōl at different points, and put down the revolt. Against these forces Hofer fought with skill and bravery; winning, especially in the final battle of Innsbruck, a glorious triumph for the Tyrolese. Again his country was delivered, and not one French or Bavarian soldier remained within its borders. Moreover, a few months later, the enemy having

returned to the charge, Hofer and eighteen thousand mountaineers defeated the veteran French marshal Lefebvre and twenty-five thousand allied troops.

For the third time the Tyrōl was free. The peasant leader now became the ruler of the country. Coins were struck with his effigy, and proclamations were issued in his name. Yet this was not in the least a usurpation. The hero was as loyal as he was powerful; as modest as he was brave. During his govern-

THE HOME-COMING OF THE CONQUERORS.

orship, he lived, indeed, in the imperial palace at Innsbruck, but for his personal expenses and salary he drew from the treasury ninety cents a day! His simple habits were the same as when he had been an inn-keeper in the Passeier Thal. He also declared emphatically that he was acting thus solely as the representative of the Austrian kaiser, until the latter should be once more sovereign of the Tyrōl. "*So, und nit anders*," he said.

At length, however, Napoleon's victory at Wagram and his second occupation of Vienna changed the face of affairs. The defeated Austrian emperor was obliged to sign a treaty, whereby he agreed to withdraw all troops from the Tyrōl, and to consent to its reabsorption by Bavaria. When these appalling tidings reached the Tyrolese, they thought them an invention of the enemy. It seemed incredible that, after such fierce fighting, brilliant victories, and loss of precious lives, they must be thrust

TYROLESE MILITIA.

back into the condition from which they had so nobly freed themselves. Doubt was, however, soon dispelled by the arrival of a messenger from the kaiser, commanding the Tyrolese to make no further resistance, and to resign themselves to the inevitable. Hofer obeyed, and having yielded submission to Napoleon's stepson, Eugene, then viceroy of Italy, ordered his followers to lay down their arms. This many of them refused to do. Hundreds of desperate and unhappy peasants would not accept the

ONE OF THE HEROES OF 1809

situation, and begged their former leader to lead them out once more against the enemy. To influence him to do this, some willfully invented stories of victories of the Austrians over the French. Others reproached him for his cowardice in not completing what he had begun. In an evil moment Hofer yielded to this pressure, which doubtless coincided with his own desires, though not with his calm judgment, and called the Tyrolese again to arms.

Fierce fighting followed, especially near Meran and in Passeier Thal; but there was wanting now that national unity which had made all the previous attempts successful, and when another army of fifty thousand French and Bavarians entered the exhausted province, Hofer, unable to resist such overpowering numbers, retired to his mountain home. A price of fifteen hundred gulden was set upon his head, and for this sum a former friend, a man named Riffl, from Schenna, two miles distant from Meran, was base enough to play the rôle of Judas. Under his guidance a party of French soldiers reached at last the hut where Andreas had taken refuge; and at four o'clock in the morning, on the 28th of January, 1810, the patriot was captured.

OLD CHAPEL NEAR HOFER'S HOUSE.

The French troops brought him jubilantly to Meran, where one may still behold the house in which he passed the night before being taken on to Italy. It stands in the street known as the Rennweg, and on its front wall is a marble tablet with the inscription: "In this house, on the night of the twenty-eighth of January, 1810, Andreas Hofer,

HOTEL GRAF VON MERAN, WITH HOFER MEMORIAL TABLET.

the hero of the Tyrōl, was detained as a prisoner, before his painful journey to Mantua." A few steps from this structure, on the façade of the hotel "Graf von Meran," is a marble bust of the great leader, with a memorial tablet testifying to the fact that there, on the same night, he was formally questioned as a prisoner by General Huard.

In Mantua, Hofer was promptly tried by court-martial, and sentenced to be shot. He met his fate with the courage which had always characterized him, and when led out to death refused alike to have his eyes bandaged or to kneel. Standing erect before his executioners, his last words were: "Long live Kaiser Franz! Fire!"

ANDREAS HOFER'S HOME.

Even the printed record of such a life and death is thrilling; but how much more do they impress us, when, after driving through his native valley, we see the modest house in which he lived as child and man! It is still used as a wayside inn, and its rooms are practically unaltered; while the surrounding mountains wear for us the same calm majesty which clothed them, when he left their snow-clad slopes to give his life for Tyrolese freedom. I looked with mournful interest at many of his personal relics, particularly his hat, threadbare from usage in the field, and pierced with several bullet-holes. But that which touched me most was his last letter, written at Mantua four hours before his death. Among its closing lines are these pathetic words: "Adieu, base world! Death seems to me so easy, that my eyes are not moistened by a tear." In fact, for this brave, simple-hearted man life could have had no more illusions. As he sat, quietly awaiting the inevitable summons, his whole career must have seemed to him a failure. He had fought strenuously, and had gained great victories, but how had they benefited either himself or the Tyrōl? He had repeatedly called his countrymen to conflict, but the result of their self-sacrificing efforts had been the second subjugation of their land, whose

NEW MEMORIAL CHAPEL, NEAR HOFER'S HOUSE.

soil had meantime drunk the blood of thousands of its children. He had toiled only for the good of his compatriots, yet one of them had betrayed him, — and for money! He had lost home, wife, children, and now life itself, to wrest his country from the domination of Napoleon, and to restore it to the Austrian emperor; yet, at the very moment when French soldiers were to shoot him, the bells were ringing in Vienna to announce the coming marriage of that emperor's daughter, Marie Louise, with his conqueror, Napoleon!

Truly to Andreas Hofer, at that hour, evil must have seemed triumphant. There is something terrible in the sight of such a man, compelled to face the shadow of approaching death, with nothing but a consciousness of rectitude to counteract his sickening sense of personal failure, man's ingratitude, and God's injustice. Sublime indeed must that soul be, which can at such a time look forward confidently to his vindication at the bar of history. In Andreas Hofer's case the vindication came with startling promptness. The marriage bells of Bonaparte were in reality sounding the knell of his stupendous empire. The Tyrōl soon became again incorporated with Austria. The traitor Riffl is now execrated as the Tyrolese Iscariot; and the brave martyr of Mantua is the ideal hero of his fatherland.

HOFER LED TO EXECUTION.

The Austrian kaiser showed his appreciation of his faithful subject by conferring a handsome pension on his widow, and raising his family to the ranks of

the nobility. Moreover, in 1823, the patriot's body was brought back to the Tyrōl, and buried with impressive ceremonies in the Franciscan church in Innsbruck, only a few feet distant from the splendid tomb of Maximilian I. There, near the figures of illustrious warriors and princes, rises to-day, in spotless marble, a statue of this white-souled peasant, whose rare devotion to "God, Kaiser, and Fatherland" has gained for him a deathless fame. But this is only one of many proofs of Austria's reverence for her hero. Thus, only a few steps from his home in the Passeier Thal, and close beside the humble church where Hofer prayed, there has been recently built, by subscriptions from the entire empire, a beautiful memorial chapel, adorned with paintings eloquent of his unselfish loyalty and fearless death. Moreover, in the summer of 1893, there was erected on the hill above Innsbruck, called Berg Isel, an imposing bronze statue of the popular leader, marking the spot where he and his companions steadfastly withstood the onslaughts of the enemy, and from which, upon three occasions, he led his mountaineers to as many brilliant victories.

HOFER'S TOMB IN THE FRANCISCAN CHURCH.

But that which specially recalls the memory of Hofer to the greatest number of his countrymen, and will perhaps prove

more enduring even than bronze, is the portrayal of his life by means of popular plays, of which he is the hero. At Meran, for example, there has been constructed, on a broad meadow, near the town, an open-air theatre, similar to that of Oberammergau, the stage of which represents a village street, before a characteristic peasant's house with pretty wooden galleries and gables. Here, in the spring and autumn, a company of actors chosen from the people performs with admirable skill and genuine enthusiasm two dramas, written by Herr Carl Wolf, a citizen of Meran, which treat of the glorious days of 1809, as dear to Tyrolese hearts as are those of 1776 to Americans. These plays, which are entitled "Andreas Hofer" and "Tyrolese Heroes," produce a profound impression not only on the peasants who behold them, but also on the strangers, who attend them in large numbers. So many are the performers, so lifelike are their tableaux, so passionate is at times their acting, and, above all, so realistic are the movements of the crowds, lit only by the sun and shadowed merely by the passing clouds, that even a foreigner is deeply moved, as he reflects that many of these actors are the grandchildren of the patriots whose deeds they thus commemorate, and that they

MONUMENT TO HOFER ON BERG ISEL.

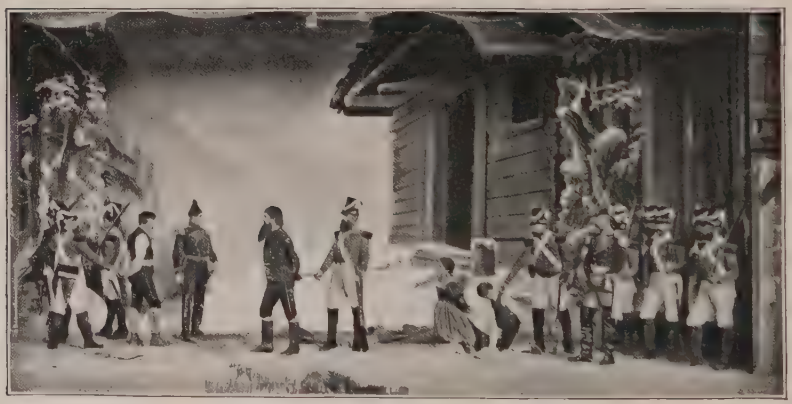
wear, in many instances, the very clothes which those defenders of their country wore, still kept as priceless heirlooms in their families. Meanwhile, above the background of the rustic stage, tower the same eternal mountains which they saw and loved, their bright green slopes flecked now, as then, with herdsmen's huts and white-walled homes for which the heroes fought and died. At any moment during the performance we have but to

THE OPEN-AIR THEATRE IN MERAN.

lift our eyes, to see, commanding the entire valley, like the presiding genius of the place, the stately form of Schloss Tyrōl; and during the representation of the battle we watch the puffs of smoke spring out from the steep mountain sides, and hear the roll of musketry, just as it echoed over the town when the real strife was raging, and when at last the French were beaten back to the precipitous cliffs, over whose brink the mountaineers drove them to their doom.

THE BATTLE SCENE IN THE PLAY "ANDREAS HOFER."

What could be more instructive and inspiring than national history thus taught? As the play proceeds, one can perceive the lesson gradually stamping itself upon the faces of both auditors and actors; and we are certain that the steadfast men who gather on the stage in answer to the waving of the flag, would rally just as loyally beneath its folds of white and red, if once again the children, playing in the neighboring meadow, should — as they did in 1809 — rush to the town to spread the news that the French soldiers were at hand. These peasants, armed with



THE HERO CAPTURED. (FROM THE PLAY.)

antique muskets, scythes, and pitchforks, are doubtless just such men as Andreas Hofer led to victory; and the brave, wholesome looking girls who urge their brothers, lovers, and young husbands on to valiant deeds, are capable to-day of no less self-renunciation and enthusiasm. The vines that drape the Küchelberg in graceful terraces have bloomed and ripened into fruit nearly a hundred times since the rich soil from which they spring drank greedily the blood of Austria's invaders; but ruddy as the juice within their purpling clusters still flows the lifeblood of the Tyrolese; and when the curtain of the drama falls, and the impressive strains of Austria's national hymn ring out upon the air, the entire multitude rises reverently to its feet, as is invariably the case whenever that simple but soul-moving composition of Haydn is played. One cannot wonder, therefore, that in the crowd which thus disperses, thrilled with the sentiments awakened by the brilliant page of history that has been unrolled before them, hundreds of loyal lips repeat, in unison with the melody, the words: —

"Gott erhalte, Gott beschütze,
Unsern Kaiser, unser Land!"

In driving back into the city, we pass beneath the massive Vintschgau Gate, through which the Paul Revere of the Tyrōl galloped to bring the signal of revolt to the expectant people in the western valleys. It

THE VINTSCHGAU GATE

is but one of several portals of the old, mediæval town, one of which, known as the Passeier Thor, is decorated with the favorite emblem of the country, — the eagle of Tyrōl, which differs from all other representations of the bird of freedom in being of a brilliant red, surmounting either a silver shield or a battlemented wall. The famous lines referring to it are dear to every Tyrolese heart, and may be thus translated: —

THE RED TYROLEAN EAGLE

Eagle, Tyrolean eagle,
Why are thy plumes so red?
"In part because I rest
On Ortler's lordly crest;
There share I with the snow
The sunset's crimson glow."

Eagle, Tyrolean eagle,
Why are thy plumes so red?
"From drinking of the wine
Of Etschland's peerless vine;
Its juice so redly shines,
That it incarnadines."

Eagle, Tyrolean eagle,
Why are thy plumes so red?
"My plumage hath been dyed
In blood my foes supplied;
Oft on my breast hath lain
That deeply purple stain."

Eagle, Tyrolean eagle,
Why are thy plumes so red?
"From suns that fiercely shine,
From draughts of ruddy wine,
From blood my foes have shed, —
From these am I so red."

THE PASSEIER THOR.

Like jewels in the coronet of silvered peaks encircling Meran, glitter no less than thirty-five interesting and historic castles. Near or remote, they add a striking element of picturesqueness to the landscape, and stimulate our curiosity to learn the secrets guarded by their massive walls. The first of these in beauty of position and historical importance is Schloss Tyrōl. Its situation is superb. Set high upon the valley's northern wall of mountains, it dominates not only the entire plain, through which the glacial Etsch sweeps southward into Italy, but also has an uninterrupted view for a long distance westward up the Vintschgau Thal toward Switzerland. Hence, more than any other point in the vicinity of Meran, it is the favorite of Phœbus. On the old castle's yellow walls, which seem to have been richly tinted by the floods of sunshine they have constantly

A VIEW IN OBERMAIS.

absorbed, fall the first solar rays that shoot across the valley from the east; and all day long its broad, high, southward-facing front is bathed in warmth and light; while in the winter afternoons, long after Meran lies in shadow, the snow-encircled Vintschgau Thal is like a monster window, framed in crystal, through which the glory of the universe comes streaming eastward, making this precious shrine of Tyrolese art and history

SCHLOSS TYRŌL AND THE VINTSCHGAU VALLEY.

so luminous, that one could easily fancy it a golden casket, in which the treasures of past centuries are concealed. If, out of all the castles, towers, and convents of Tyrōl, one building only had to be chosen, as the characteristic structure of the country, it would undoubtedly be this. For it has given its name to the entire land in which it stands, as well as to the "Counts of Tyrōl," who enter on the stage of history about the middle of the twelfth century as owners of this stronghold and as rulers of the country.

The word "Tyrōl" can, however, be traced back to the Latin "Teriolis," — the name of a Roman fortress existing, contemporaneously with the settlement Maia, in the immediate vicinity of this castle. The importance of this Teriolis is proved by the fact that in an enumeration of the notable places of the Roman Empire at the time of the emperor Theodosius I. — 408-450 A.D. — it is mentioned as being the residence of a tribune

SCHLOSS TYRŌL AND THE OLD WATCH TOWER.

and a prefect of the third legion. Indeed, a few steps north of Schloss Tyrōl, there still stands, to the height of thirty feet, part of a massive watch-tower, originally built here by the Romans early in the history of their conquest. It was but natural that such experienced warriors should avail themselves of this strategic point; for it commands such long perspectives to the south and west, that one could easily discern from it the smoke by day, or flame by night, of any beacon-fire kindled on a similar tower on the road to Switzerland, and could have

readily passed the signal on to a third fortress, visible far to the south near Botzen.

The usual route to Schloss Tyrōl leads over the Küchelberg, either by a winding carriage road, or by a steeper footpath, through the little village of Dorf Tyrōl. Between this hamlet and the tongue of land on which the castle stands, yawns an abyss, along the brink of which the tourist must make his way on foot, astonished at his strange environment. Although some sort of a ravine must always have existed here, a landslide, which occurred three hundred and fifty years ago, enormously increased its depth and breadth, and tore away so much of the western bank, that a considerable portion of the castle, containing sixteen rooms, fell with it into the raging torrent. At present, therefore, the venerable building rises almost from the edge of a precipice, and offers an imposing aspect to the

A GATE IN DORF TYRŌL.

visitor, as he approaches it by the narrow path, which leads him round the head of the gorge, and thence along the heavily wooded mountain side. To this experience is added the necessity of walking through a rather low-roofed tunnel, built by the emperor Leopold, in 1681, to make the route secure from avalanches.

THE TUNNEL NEAR SCHLOSS TYRŌL.

When one has finally reached the castle, he feels perhaps a little disappointed that, in itself, it has not more to illustrate its long, eventful record. But after the vicissitudes it has experienced, the principal cause for wonder is that it still exists. In 1806, for example, the Bavarians seemed determined to destroy this national monument, together with everything else beloved by the Tyrolese, and intimately connected with their history. At all events, they took from it practically everything that was not nailed and riveted, and finally sold the grand ancestral pile

DOORWAY OF THE CHAPEL, SCHLOSS TYRŌL.

for a trifling sum to the highest bidder. At present, therefore, part of the entrance gate, an interesting chapel, built in 1331, and two stone doorways, whose quaint sculptures wear the scars of many centuries, are about all that can be shown to us by the cicerone. Yet, even apart from its magnificent view which would itself repay a long and arduous journey, the prominence and importance of this castle might well make any one feel

THE OLD CHAPEL OF SCHLOSS TYRŌL.

privileged to stand within its walls. We have already seen that it gave its name to the Tyrōl; and during many centuries the feeling of the people in regard to it was shown by their familiar saying, "Only the lord of Schloss Tyrōl is also lord of the land." It was, in fact, the central point of the whole territory: the place where all State ceremonies were enacted; the residence of its princes; in a word, the very heart of the country whose vigorous pulsations sent life and force to every portion of its rugged frame.

But the significance of this building is not limited to the Tyrōl. It is in some respects the most interesting castle in the whole Austrian Empire, since it is one of the cradles of the reigning family. The original home of the Hapsburgs, on the male side, is the ruined schloss near Brugg, Switzerland, built in the eleventh century; but neither the country in which it stands, nor the château itself, is now in the possession of Austria. On the female side, however, the present Austrian dynasty comes from the family of Görz-Tyrōl, whose residence was this majestic stronghold just above Meran. Moreover, as is fitting, this is now the property of the emperor. For when, in 1816, the Tyrōl was restored to Austria, the people of Meran redeemed their castle from the man who had bought it of the Bavarians, and gave it, as a token of their love and loyalty, to Kaiser Franz I., who came here to receive the gift. The beautifully written and handsomely bound document, in which the transfer of the property was made, as well as the accompanying key to the castle

VINEYARDS ON THE KÜCHELBERG.

gate, may still be seen among the treasures of the State at Innsbruck.

As Sigmund and Eleanor are the personages who most interest us in connection with the Princes' Castle in Meran, so the most striking figure in the history of Schloss Tyrōl is Margaret Maultasch, who held her brilliant court here in the period of its greatest splendor, from 1335 to 1363. This princess has been called the Tyrolese Marie Stuart. Certainly not, however, in respect to beauty, for her thick lips and prominent jaw gave to her the unenviable name of "Maultasch," or the "pocket-mouthed." The comparison seems rather to have been made on account of certain reckless, passionate proclivities, which are sometimes without sufficient reason ascribed to the fair Scottish queen. Like Mary, for example, Margaret of Tyrōl is said to have murdered her second husband; but neither charge has ever been substantiated. Numerous legends, too, exist which would ally her rather to a Catherine II., or a Messalina; but most of these are fables. Certain it is, however, that her two peculiar marriages, as well as some of her political acts, exerted a more powerful influence on the destiny of her country than those of any other Tyrolese ruler; and it is to Margaret's own deliberate gift of the Tyrōl to her Hapsburg relatives, in 1363, that Austria owes its possession of this land for more than half a thousand years.

THE CRADLE OF THE HAPSBURGS, NEAR BRUGG, SWITZERLAND.

One characteristic act of this impulsive and determined woman is worth relating. Her life with her first husband, John of

Luxemburg, was so unhappy that she adopted drastic measures to get rid of him, without, however, resorting to poison or the dagger. One fine November morning, in 1340, John rode away from Schloss Tyrōl to hunt as usual, without a suspicion of his coming fate. But

"Alas, alack!
When he came back"

VIEW TOWARD ITALY, FROM SCHLOSS TYRŌL.

that autumn evening, ready for his supper, he found the drawbridge raised, and the portal locked and barred. To his amazed inquiry as to what this meant, the answer came that the castle, of which until then he had supposed himself to be the master, was closed to him forever. In vain he raged, swore, threatened, and implored. It was no jest, and Margaret, true to the character denoted by her lower jaw, would not, and did not, change her mind. He had no friends in Meran to whom he could appeal,

for all the Tyrolese detested him, and the few personal followers whom he had brought here with him had likewise been expelled during his absence at the chase. Accordingly, he was compelled to leave the country, and carry back to his father's court the shame of his humiliating banishment.

A woman of Margaret's spirit naturally did not hesitate now to wed the man she loved, despite the warnings of the Church

SCHLOSS TYRŌL, FROM THE WEST.

and even a papal bull of excommunication. In the following February, therefore, she married her second husband, Ludwig of Brandenburg. This union, which in after years the Church consented to acknowledge, seems to have been a reasonably happy one; but, as a matter of course, it led to a bloody war with the relatives of the outcast John, who were determined to avenge the insult which his wife had given them, and incidentally to obtain some Tyrolese territory as indemnity. In 1347, there-

fore, John's brother, Karl of Bohemia, suddenly appeared before Schloss Tyrōl, and laid siege to it; but Margaret and her husband fought so gallantly in its defense, that the invader was compelled to withdraw his troops, and subsequently suffered, farther down the valley, a severe defeat. Unfortunately, however, in this instance, as usual, the poor and innocent had to pay most dearly for the faults and follies of their masters. Not

RUINS OF SCHLOSS MAULTASCH.

only was the fine old castle on the Zenoberg, where Margaret as a child had lived, and also another residence of hers known as Schloss Maultasch, destroyed by the Bohemians, but Botzen and Meran, with all the villages lying between them, were sacked and laid in ashes. Sites of such beauty and fertility, however, recover quickly from misfortunes; and it was at this time, when much of Meran was being restored, that its parish church was built, which still exists in an admirable state of preservation, and boasts of the loftiest spire in Tyrōl.

REMAINS OF THE CASTLE ON THE ZENOBERG.

When Margaret's husband died in 1361, and in less than a year thereafter her only son, who had succeeded him, also passed away, the spirit of the princess was completely broken. Sad and disheartened, she refused to govern any longer, and abdicated in favor of her young, ambitious, and clever cousin, Rudolph IV. of Hapsburg, then Duke of Austria, who thus, in 1363, became the sovereign of this land, which ever since has held its place as one of the most precious jewels in the Austrian crown.

The castles which surround Meran still stand in proud reserve on their respective heights, scorning companionship, and seemingly suspicious of one another in their isolation. The towers of many of them have foundations laid in Roman times, and all of them are rich in architectural and historic features, out of which a romance could be written. Schloss Auer, seamed and grisly with age; the ruined piles of Brunnenburg and Dürrenstein, subservient

APSE OF THE PARISH CHURCH, MERAN.

SCHLOSS PLANTA, OBERMAIS.

formerly to Schloss Tyrōl; Schloss Fragsburg, crowning the plateau which dominates the entire plain; and Katzenstein, which nestles at its feet, like a beloved but lowly favorite; Schloss Lebenburg, across the valley, haughty in its solitary grandeur; Schloss Goyen, shadowed by the giant Ifinger; Schloss Planta, with its ivy-mantled tower; Schloss Rametz, whose high, crenelated walls and ivied terraces rise out of vineyards famous for their wine; Schloss Winkel, whose huge mass of masonry has formed a prominent part of Obermais for centuries; Schloss Rothenstein, the property of one of the imperial family; and Schloss Rubeín, whose ancient tower overlooks a garden of enchanting beauty, — these are a few of the interesting structures here which were already old before the earliest flower of civilization blossomed in the wilderness stretching from Atlantic to Pacific in the vast continent beyond the seas.

The limits of this volume forbid detailed description of these castles, but one at least claims more than passing mention. It

SCHLOSS RAMETZ, OBERMAIS.

is Schloss Forst, which has for seven centuries, practically in its present form, guarded the entrance to the Vintschgau valley. This castle can be reached by carriage in about twenty minutes from Meran along the well-made road that has replaced the Via Claudia Augusta, built by Drusus two millenniums ago. It stands upon a little hill, apparently fashioned by Nature for the special purpose of supporting it; for so well suited are the proportions of the building to its foundations, that they suggest a

SCHLOSS FORST.

statue and its pedestal. The picturesque and original architecture of this ancient stronghold finds its culmination in the crenelated tower, whose square teeth rim the battlement and indent the sky at a height of about one hundred feet above its massive base. This central pile of masonry, whose walls are more than seven feet thick, seems capable of lasting for as many centuries as it has survived already. How many these have been is still a matter of dispute; but it is claimed that the foun-

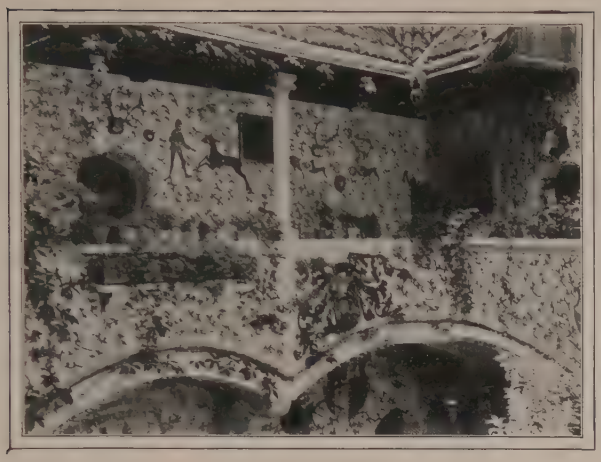
dations of the tower are of Roman origin, and it is not unlikely that a fortress was erected here as a defensive outpost of the Station Maia. Stern and severe it now appears, together with the similarly fashioned northern side of the castle; but these are pleasantly relieved by a semicircular front, which, curving southward like an immense bow window, brings several fine rooms into the warmth and splendor of Tyrolean sunshine. Beside this stands a partially enclosed, hexagonal tower, surmounted by a conical roof of bright red tiles, and almost covered with a mass of vines; while closely adjoining it, at a point commanding a delightful view, an ivied loggia clings like a swallow's nest to the gray wall. From the street gate a footpath winds around the hill on one side, a driveway on the other, their meeting place being at the castle's massive portal on the summit.

ENTRANCE TO SCHLOSS FORST.

The clangor that reverberated through the courtyard when I pulled the iron bell-handle was answered by the deep-voiced challenge of two dogs which, as the heavy oaken door swung open, stood ready to be fierce or friendly, as their master should direct. A moment later, I was greeted by that master, — a

THE COURTYARD OF SCHLOSS FORST.

courteous, middle-aged English gentleman, Mr. Horace Cross by name, who, having recently retired from the British navy after twenty-five years of service, now lives here with his charming wife, happy in the possession of this grand old mansion for a permanent home. I looked about me with surprise and admiration at the beautiful, two-storied court around which the château is built. Roofed only by the sky, it pleasantly recalled to me some *patios* of Spain and Mexico, and even suggested the atrium of a Pompeian dwelling, changed and adapted to a more northern climate and to Anglo-Saxon tastes. Around its richly frescoed walls stood scores of potted trees and plants; some partially concealing the thick columns, while others wreathed the fountain with green leaves and ferns. In the second story, also, the pendent vines and tendrils of as many other plants swung lightly from the balcony, like silken threads of an unraveled Oriental tapestry, in many cases intertwining with the



COURTYARD FRESCOES.

upward-reaching foliage of the plants below. Upon the walls I noticed also several coats of arms, — emblems of former owners of Schloss Forst, one of them dating back to the twelfth century; while here and there, among the arches, I read with pleasure some of the quaint, rhymed mottoes, which add a charm to many German dwellings either by wise and witty epigrams, or by their hospitable words of welcome and of love of home.

A ROOM IN SCHLOSS FORST.

Nor are these features characteristic of the courtyard only. A mediæval air pervades the entire schloss. Here are old-fashioned chairs and benches, such as the knights and ladies of the

days of chivalry might have used; and here — as if to make this picture of the past a living one — I saw two travel-stained and humble wayfarers seated at an antique table, while waiting for the bowl of soup and bread which is invariably given to every one who asks for it. For thus the present owner of Schloss Forst perpetuates the hospitable traditions of the place, and all day long nourishing soup-stock stands in readiness to assuage the hunger of the poor.

In going farther through this princely residence, I was especially impressed by the fact that neither in the bedrooms, dining room, library, nor parlor, has one discordant element been allowed to enter in furniture or decorations. The electric light is present, but all its burners are concealed in antique lanterns or appropriate fixtures suitable to the Cinque-Cento. An upright piano of the latest make has been encased in a severely simple frame, suggestive of an ancient spinet. The beds and chairs are eminently comfortable, but their soft cushions have been deftly hidden under tapestry or robes of fur; and Gothic bedsteads, sideboards, wardrobes, seats, and tables are richly carved in old Tyrolean style, when they are not, as in some instances, genuine antique works of art, such as the stately bed in the principal guest room, once the property of Maria Theresa.

IN THE KNIGHT'S HALL.

The walls of many of these apartments are covered with a handsome wainscot; the ceilings are of carved or inlaid woods; and even the paintings on the walls are works of the old masters, and thus combine with all the other appointments to represent the noble structure at its best, in perfect harmony with its eventful history.

IN THE CASTLE GARDEN.

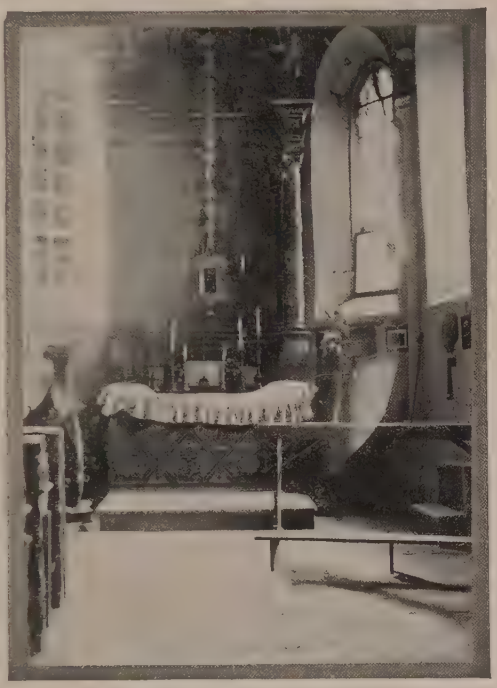
It is a privilege to lean upon the sill of one of the deep-set windows of the ancient tower, on a summer's day, and look down on the garden at its base. Here vines are still producing the seductive juice which, in the olden times, was quaffed amid the songs of Minnesingers by the inmates of the castle; and here the fruit trees bloom and ripen their delicious gifts in the warm sun as they did centuries ago. The spot seems now the very embodiment of peace; yet well we know that the fair fields and vineries toward which, each afternoon, the lofty turret points its lengthening shadow, have been the scene of many a siege and sanguinary conflict; and peasants, digging in the soil, have here unearthed a multitude of Roman and mediæval missiles, — proofs of the immemorial hatred of his brother that man has cherished since the days of Cain.

Could we but understand the murmur of the silvery river, Etsch, which rushes musically by, what might we not discover of the wars, loves, joys, crimes, sorrows, and adventures of those who have been masters of this castle since its foundation stones were laid! For probably no other schloss in the Tyrōl possesses

such a number and variety of interesting legends. They range from one of the more ordinary type, in which two brothers fight a duel to the death in its old chapel, until the blood of the murdered man sprinkles the wall with stains still ineffaceable, though dimly seen, to the half-humorous, half-tragic story of a Capuchin monk, who, passing the castle one Good Friday night, was horrified to hear the sounds of revelry and dancing issuing from its banquet hall. Without an instant's hesitation he strode up to the gate, demanded and secured admission, and suddenly confronting the astonished chatelain and his guests, rebuked them for their shameless sacrilege. Not in the least abashed, the

SCHLOSS FORST, THE RIVER ETSCH, AND THE ZIELSPITZE.

persons thus reproved unceremoniously grabbed him by his cowl and gown, and threw him over the balcony into the courtyard, whence he departed more dead than alive, not without making, however, the grewsome prediction that, ere the current year expired, all of the guilty revelers should die in punishment for their desecration of Good Friday and for their scandalous treatment of a man of God. Needless to say, according to the legend, the prophecy was fulfilled, and all participants in the debauch perished within the allotted time.



THE CHAPEL, SCHLOSS FORST.

But the most stirring story of Schloss Forst (which has, moreover, the immense advantage of being true) is that of the imprisonment here of Oswald von Wolkenstein, the Last of the Minnesingers, under conditions which would furnish fine material for poet, novelist, or playwright. Within the castle courtyard, partially hidden now by plants and flowers, a low-browed Gothic archway leads to a circular dungeon, which, with its two thin apertures that serve as windows, presents a startling contrast in its chilling, twilight gloom to the sweet air and sunshine of the outer world. Originally, however, it was worse; for, whereas now an accumulation of rubbish brings its

floor to within six feet of the level of the court, it formerly had a depth of thirty. A comfortless abode, indeed, for one who had sung his poems to fair ladies in the light and luxury of stately palaces.

The incidents connected with the incarceration of this gifted poet and musician are in the highest degree romantic. Oswald had loved a beautiful woman, named Sabina Jäger, who seems to have been as black in soul as she was fair in body. That she returned his passion for a time cannot be doubted, if we may judge from his enthusiastic songs of joy. Nor was he a man without good claims to any woman's love and admiration. Although still young, he was already renowned both as a poet and a warrior, and had not only traveled through Russia, England, France, and Spain, but had explored the Orient as far as Persia. He was, moreover, fascinating as a singer and player on the harp. Nevertheless Sabina quickly tired of him; and, having more ambitious schemes, got rid of him temporarily in a very original way. Under the pretense of exacting from him a final proof of his love for her, she demanded that he should go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, promising him that if he would

ENTRANCE TO THE DUNGEON IN SCHLOSS FORST.

bring her water from the river Jordan, straw from the manger at Bethlehem, and sand from the desert of Sahara, she would marry him. To please her and, as he supposed, to win her as his wife, the unsuspecting Oswald went to Palestine, wearing around his neck a small gold chain, which she had given him as a talisman and token of her love. Scarcely was he gone, however, when the fair Sabina married a much older, and of course much wealthier, man. In those days news traveled slowly, and the ill-fated poet made his pilgrimage and returned, without an inkling of her faithlessness. His grief at learning of her conduct was moreover intensified by the fact that on his fruitless journey he had lost an eye, and was disfigured by a wound. Sabina, however, merely laughed at his dis-

ON THE WAY TO OSWALD'S BIRTHPLACE.

SCHLOSS TRÖSTBURG, EARLY HOME OF OSWALD.

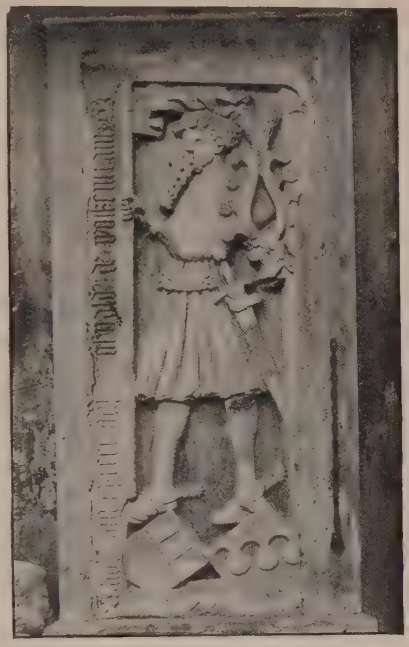
DOOR OF DUNGEON, AND CHAIN ONCE ATTACHED TO OSWALD.

tress and mocked at his misfortune. Oswald avenged himself by writing poems on her treachery and heartlessness, and singing them in courts and castles. Years passed. Sabina, stung to fury, left that part of the country, and became the favorite, at Meran, of the Tyrolese ruler, known as "Frederick of the Empty Pocket." Oswald, meantime, had married and was the father of two children.

To all appearances the affair was ended. Frederick, however, hated Oswald for opposing him in a struggle which had long been going on between him and his powerful nobles. Probably, too, his hatred was increased by that most bitter of all heartaches, — retrospective jealousy. At all events, he asked Sabina to assist him to get the Minnesinger into his power. The siren, who had never forgiven or for-

RUINS OF SCHLOSS HAUENSTEIN, OSWALD'S LATEST RESIDENCE.

gotten the satire of Oswald's verses, gladly availed herself of the opportunity to reward, at the same time, her present lover, and to effect the ruin of his predecessor. Accordingly, in November, 1421, she wrote to the Minnesinger that she could not forget their hours of happiness, and that in spite of all that had transpired she loved him still. If he, too, thought of the old days and wished to live them over again, he was to come immediately to Schloss Forst near Meran. "*On revient toujours à ses premiers amours*," says a philosopher. Oswald von Wolkenstein certainly returned to his; for on receiving that letter he remembered only that its writer had been the supreme love of his life. The fire he had thought extinct, but which was merely smoldering, blazed at once into a flame. Abandoning his family, the infatuated poet hastened to the rendezvous. But there, instead of a tender, loving woman, he found four armed men waiting to receive him, by whom he was immediately thrown into the dungeon of the castle. Here the poor, disillusioned lover was not only cruelly left for months to languish in a pitiable condition, but Sabina herself, with detestable vindictiveness, frequently came to taunt him with his weakness and credulity, and even to witness tortures shamefully inflicted on his person.



GRAVESTONE OF OSWALD, BRIXEN, SOUTH TYRŌL.

Finally, when Frederick had achieved his purpose, his

wretched victim was released, and happily obtained forgiveness from his wife, whose love meantime had never waned. This noble woman nursed him back to health and strength; and it was after this period, when living with his "true-hearted Margaretha," that he composed in the evening of his life his best and sweetest poems. The story of Oswald, therefore, ends like a peaceful sunset of great beauty after a day of storms; for, in 1445, he died, beloved and honored, at the ripe age of seventy-eight, at his home in Schloss Hauenstein, romantically situated in the solitude of a majestic Tyrolese forest, only a few hours distant from Meran.

This history of Oswald has been dwelt upon, not merely on account of its intrinsic interest, but from the fact that it suggests a subject of the highest importance to any sketch of Austria and the Tyrōl. It was his proud and melancholy distinction to be the "Last of the Minnesingers" — in other words, the latest born of those romantic bards of central Europe whose sudden advent in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, after the appall-

SITUATION OF SCHLOSS HAUENSTEIN IN THE FOREST.

ing gloom and ignorance of the "Dark Ages," is one of the most extraordinary events in the history of literature. Except upon the theory of a simultaneous reincarnation of previously musical souls, it is difficult to explain this well-nigh contemporaneous renaissance of song and poetry among the Troubadours of France and the Minnesingers of Germany. For, although practically synchronous, the two schools seem to have been quite independent of each other; much as two great inventors in different parts of the world may at the same time bring to light the same discovery.

The name Minnesinger — derived from the old word "Minne," signifying love — sufficiently indicates the usual subject of their compositions, which they were wont to sing to their own accompaniment on the viol. But they wrote also patriotic songs, the best of which are vibrant with the purest spirit of knight-errantry, and were well suited to the age of the Crusades, when the world rang with the renown of noble names and knightly deeds. This mediæval poetry, which remained unrivaled in Teutonic lands until the time of Goethe, had its origin in Austria, and some of its most brilliant exponents came from the Tyrōl. Thus it was an Austrian knight of unknown name who, early in the twelfth century, gathered into epic form the

HOTEL "WALTHER VON DER VOGELWEIDE."

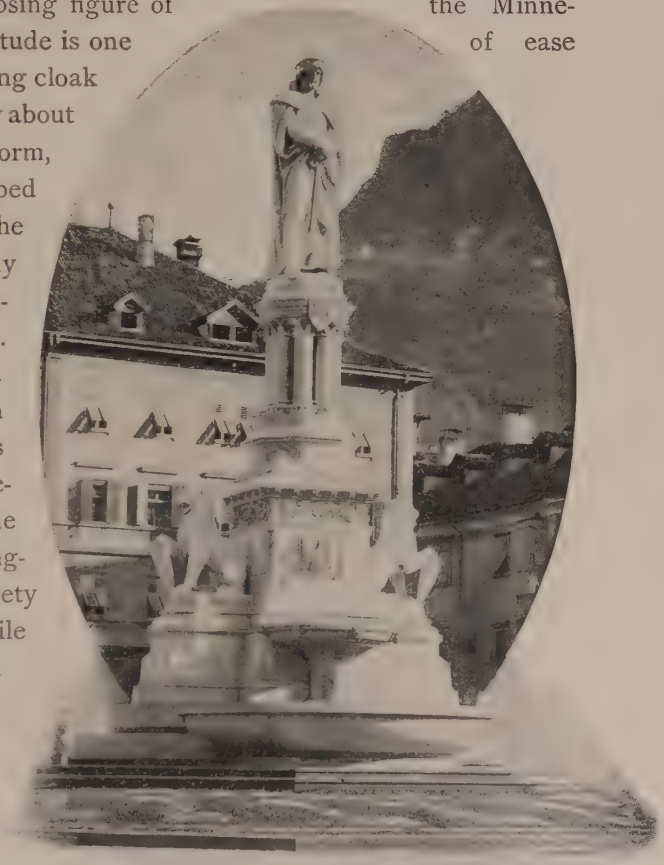
scattered ballads of the Nibelungenlied, — that Iliad of Germany whose adaptation to imperishable music was the memorable work of Wagner. Indeed, as is well known, one of the latter's most delightful operas is based upon the legendary adventures of the Austrian Minnesinger, Tannhäuser.

But it is the special glory of the Tyrōl that it also produced the man who is by common consent acknowledged to have been not only the most talented of all these Minnesingers, but the greatest lyric poet of the Middle Ages, — Walther von der Vogelweide. This famous bard was born near Waidbruck, fifteen miles from Botzen, about the year 1170, or nearly a century before the birth of Dante. His title — Walther of the Bird-Meadow — has sometimes been attributed to his love for nature and his fondness for the songs of birds; but there is little doubt that it was derived from the Tyrolean estate of "Vogelweidhof," where, as most scholars now believe, Walther first saw the light. A memorial tablet attesting this fact was affixed to the house now occupying the spot, in October, 1874, amid an enthusiastic gathering of Tyrolese and foreigners, the record of whose speeches, music, banners, and processions at this "Waltherfest"

"VOGELWEIDHOF," BIRTHPLACE OF WALTHER

bears witness to the pride and appreciation felt and shown by Austrians and Germans in honoring their illustrious dead. Subsequently, also, the city of Botzen, proud of the fact that this great mediæval bard was born in its vicinity, not only named its principal square the "Walther Platz," but also embellished it with a handsome fountain, surmounted by a really noble statue of the poet.

One hardly expects to find so fine a monument as this in a Tyrolean city of less than fourteen thousand inhabitants; but it exemplifies the fact that much of the work of modern German sculpture is of an exceedingly high order. I like to sit in one of the cafés adjoining the old square of Botzen, and study at my leisure this imposing figure of the Minnesinger. His attitude is one of ease and dignity, a long cloak falling gracefully about his stalwart form, while his clasped hands retain the viol, the harmony of which accompanied his songs. Below him, in a tiny cage with marble bars, is sculptured in relief one of the feathered songsters whose society he loved; while lower still upon the pedestal a white swan curves its



STATUE OF WALTHER, BOTZEN.

snowy neck, as if to drink of the clear water in the basin. It is a singular coincidence that, though I have looked upon this statue certainly a score of times, I have never yet failed to observe a live bird perched upon the poet's head; and probably every traveler who halts in Botzen will see — if not the same phenomenon — at least a few birds bathing in the fountain, and scores of pigeons tiptoeing about the square, as if the place were consecrated to their welfare. In fact, such is the gentle

THE CITY OF BOTZEN, SOUTH TYROL.

influence which the legend of this tender-hearted bard perpetuates after the lapse of more than seven hundred years, that pigeons are fed here by the public quite as often and as generously as in St. Mark's Square in Venice.

Walther appears to have led the usual life of the Minnesingers, and went from court to court, and castle to castle, singing songs that greatly stirred the hearts of his enthusiastic listeners. His compositions were, however, not merely powerful

in sentiment, but showed a metrical skill of the most delicate and elaborate kind. Thus, out of the one hundred and eighty-eight existing poems composed by him, at least one half are written in unique measures, and all are expressed in forms invented by himself. Many of his artistic triumphs were achieved at the brilliant court of Vienna; some of them also in the circle of poets and musicians gathered in Thuringia, at the Wartburg — that noble castle which was to play, three centuries later, so

TAPESTRY IN THE WARTBURG, WHERE THE CONTEST OF THE MINNESINGERS TOOK PLACE, 1207.

prominent a part in the life of Luther. Thus it is in the Wartburg that Wagner, in his opera of Tannhäuser, represents Walther as winning the prize in the Minnesingers' famous competition for supremacy. Walther's last days were spent at Würzburg, in Franconian Bavaria, where the emperor Frederick had given him an estate; and on his death, in 1235, he was buried under a linden tree in the cloisters of the Würzburg cathedral — a spot selected by the poet as being eminently

peaceful and always open to the sunshine and the birds. This last condition was important; for such was Walther's love for Nature's feathered minstrels that in his will he bequeathed a sum of money to furnish food and water daily to the birds, so that the space above his cloistered grave might always be melodious with the voices of the "poets of the air." So sweet a legend could not fail to touch the heart of Longfellow; and every reader will recall with pleasure his charming poem on this subject, in which occur the lines:

"Thus the bard of love departed;
And, fulfilling his desire,
On his tomb the birds were feasted
By the children of the choir.

. . . . .

"Time has long effaced the inscriptions
On the cloister's funeral stones,
And tradition only tells us
Where repose the poet's bones;

"But around the vast cathedral,
By sweet echoes multiplied,
Still the birds repeat the legend
And the name of Vogelweid."

CLOISTERS WHERE WALTHER WAS BURIED.

This reference to the Minnesingers is not called forth by an outlived custom of the past with no relation to the present time. Their influence on German life and character is still seen in the ever popular "Volkslieder" of the land. In my opinion, the fondness of the Germans for their

THE FRANCONIA FOUNTAIN, WÜRZBURG.

THE BIRD MEMORIAL TO WALTHER AT WÜRZBURG.

"People's Songs" is one of the most beautiful and ennobling characteristics of the Fatherland. Who, for example, does not recognize the enormous influence which has been exerted for three hundred years by Luther's glorious chorals? One hears them sung with admirable spirit in churches, schools, and family circles, and even by the university students on certain notable occasions. The well-known hymn,

"Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott,"

might be regarded as a national anthem, and it is certainly significant that even the orchestra at the pleasure resort of Baden-Baden, in its daily morning concert, invariably has for its first number one of the stately German chorals. Accustomed from their youth to them, the soldiers of the German army also know and sing these grand refrains, and one of them,

"Nun danket alle Gott,"

was sung by the victorious German host after the battle of Sedan, with an effect which those who heard it describe as one of the most solemn and impressive experiences of their lives.

THE CATHEDRAL AT WÜRZBURG.

STATUE OF WALTHER AT WÜRZBURG.

Two noble carriage roads in the neighborhood of Meran offer delightful excursions to the lover of Nature, and are superior in point of scenery to even the charming tour through Passeier Thal. One of these routes is of comparatively local, the other of a world-wide, fame. The first leads up the Mendel — that sharply cut, sheer mountain sentinel, which every visitor to Meran will recollect as standing, like a giant guardian, at the extremity of the Etsch Thal, and bearing a remarkable resemblance to the stern El Capitan of the Yosemite. The second is the celebrated Stelvio Route, crossing the Alps from Tyrōl to Lake Como. The Mendel has less glacial scenery than the Stelvio, for it attains but half the latter's height; but its ascent is thoroughly inspiring, presenting, as it does at every turn, romantic glimpses of the Etsch and Eisack valleys far below,

THE MENDEL ROAD.

and a magnificent distant view of the Dolomites, whose glittering summits cut the eastern sky for a length of nearly forty miles.

This road is one of those Alpine highways which never fail, however often I pass over them, to kindle my enthusiasm. Despite our claim to be so far in advance of Europe in respect to practical utility and ease in traveling, Americans must cross

THE MENDEL ROAD AND THE DOLOMITES.

the ocean to behold such roads as these. For, in comparison with thoroughfares like the Mendel and the Stelvio, most of the mountain roads in the United States (including, alas! those of our National Yellowstone Park) might be denominated mule trails. It may be said that all such European routes are made for military purposes. No doubt the governments do construct them with a view to the transportation of troops in time of war, where railways are not feasible; but meantime, decade after

decade, the bulk of traffic on their smooth and stoneless surfaces is entirely civilian. The mails are carried over them, it is true, to a few Alpine villages, but otherwise they are apparently maintained in their superb condition for the use of travelers only, of whom the great majority are, in summer, tourists. Under these circumstances it is not strange that near the summit of the Mendel Pass, forty-five hundred feet above the sea, there should be situated in a sheltered nook, surrounded by pine forests, a popular resort, with two first-class hotels. This, although visited even in winter by guests desirous of an Alpine climate of considerable mildness and surpassingly pure air, is specially frequented by the residents of Botzen and Meran in spring and autumn, and in July and August, by a multitude of travelers, from all parts of Europe. Indeed, so steadily is the tide of travel increasing here that an electric railroad to the summit has just been completed for the accommodation of those who find the carriage trip from Botzen thither in five hours inconvenient.

But the incomparable, peerless drive in the vicinity of Meran is, and must ever be, the crossing of the Stelvio to Italy. Of

THE GRAND HOTEL PENEGAL, ON THE MENDEL. VIEW FROM THE MENDEL.

this the winter visitors to South Tyrōl know nothing; for, on account of storms and snow, the route is practicable only between early June and late September. All summer long, however, a line of travelers is continually moving through Meran, on their way to or from the Pass, usually halting here a day or

A CHARACTERISTIC VIEW IN THE VINTSCHGAU VALLEY.

two to rest. The road to the Stelvio winds westward through the Vintschgau valley, whose open door is always visible from Meran. If possible, the first stage of the journey — about five hours in duration — should be made just after a rain; for, owing to heavy traffic and the composition of the soil, this portion of the way is often dusty. Beyond that point, however, neither dust nor heat will be experienced. A thunderstorm, attended with some wind, on the afternoon previous to the start, will usually make ideal weather for the excursion; for on the follow-

A GROUP OF MERAN PEASANTS.

ing morning the mountains will be clear, the air invigorating, and the road in good condition. Happy the tourists who, seated in their own hired carriage behind two spirited horses, set off on such a day in the freshness of the morning on this memorable tour. Steadily upward winds our route, soon after we emerge from the old Vintschgau portal of Meran; up past Schloss Forst, whose ivied walls are glistening in the rising sun; across the roaring waterfall, whose breathless rush creates the electric power for Meran and Obermais; over the foaming Etsch, which, at the sight of the enchanting valley waiting to receive it, leaps from ledge

A TYROLESE GIRL AND HER DEFENDER.

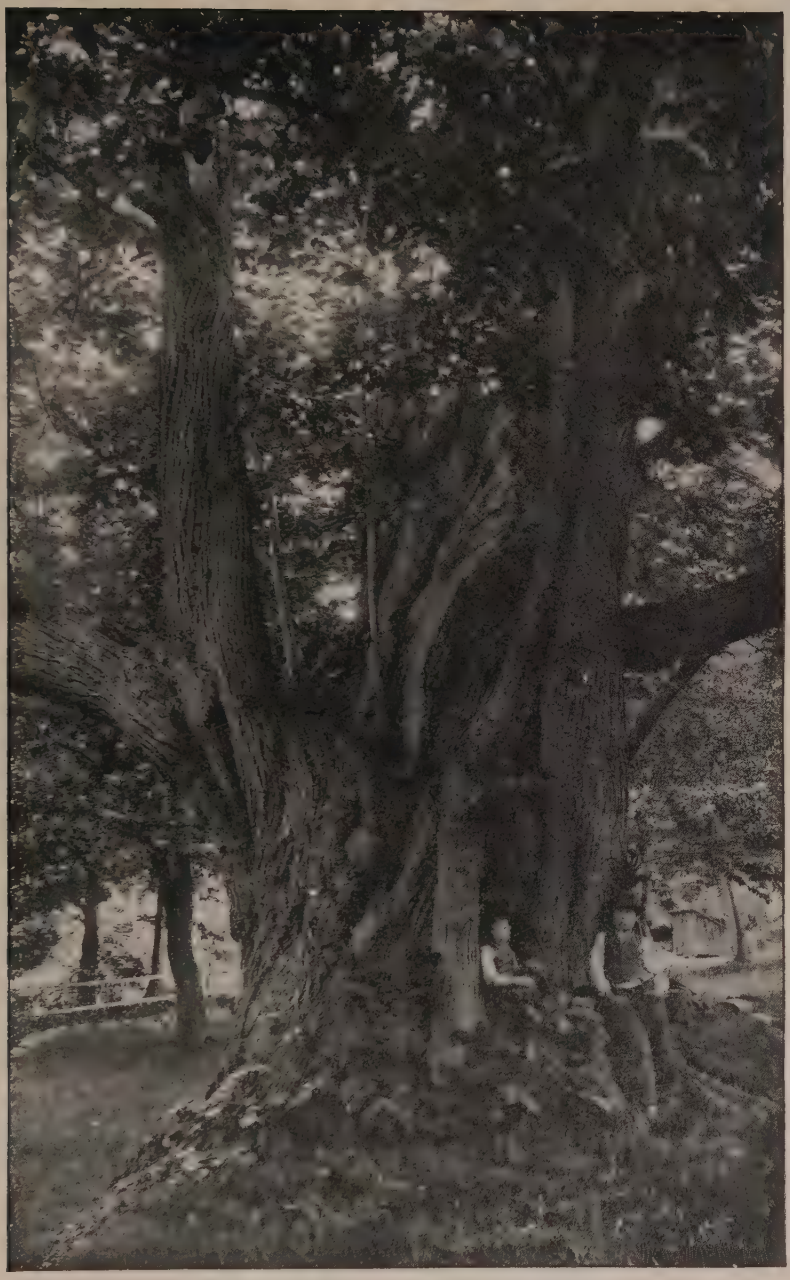
to ledge as swiftly now as when the Roman legionaries slaked their thirst in its cool flood; and, finally, out upon the "Roman Terrace," where nineteen hundred years ago stood not alone the imperial Custom House, which rendered unto Cæsar what belonged to Cæsar, but also the, no doubt conspicuous, temple of Diana, in which was paid to the fair deity the homage due the gods. Then, after giving one long, parting look at the descending Etsch Thal, shimmering in the warmth and glory of its floods of sunshine and its fruitful fields, we turn into the Vintschgau Thal, and follow the direction of the ancient Via Claudia Augusta toward the Engadine.

Upon this section of the route the author must, for lack of space, touch only lightly; but it is full of interest. At times a feudal stronghold silently salutes us from a neighboring height; its crenelated towers pointing toward the snowy pyramids nine thousand feet above it; while at its feet lie peasants' cottages and vineyards. The arcades of the latter look, in springtime, when contrasted with the neighboring flowery

SCHLOSS NATURNS, IN THE VINTSCHGAU VALLEY.

THE ROMAN TOWER AT MALS, LOOKING TOWARD THE ORTLER.

fields and blossoming fruit trees, bleak and bare; but in the summer and autumn they are grape-lined corridors of green and gold. Some of these mediæval castles are still inhabited, a modern annex having been attached to the original nucleus; and more than one of them could be transformed by a man of wealth and taste into a home that kings might covet. Others, like Castel Bell and the old tower at Mals, stand tenantless in



A SPANISH CHESTNUT TREE IN SOUTH TYRŌL.

mournful ruin. An important point is reached when we arrive at Neu Spondinig, where the road divides. The highway to the right goes on through the romantic gorge of Finstermünz to Landeck, — a picturesque old city on the river Inn, as well as a prominent station on the Vorarlberg railway which, through magnificent surroundings, climbs the Tyrolese Alps from Switzerland to Innsbruck. But we must resolutely turn from that digression, tempting though it be, and take the road which branches off from Neu Spondinig toward the left; for this it is which leads directly to the Stelvio and Italy.

The journey from Meran to the summit of the Stelvio falls naturally into three divisions, the first of which is ended at the parting of the ways in Neu Spondinig. The second is a glorious drive of about three hours to Trafoi, where one spends the night. The third stage is, of course, the Pass itself. Each of these

NEU SPONDINIG AND THE ROAD TO THE STELVIO.

sections is superior to its predecessor, not only in respect to altitude, but also in the increased ozone of its atmosphere and the grandeur of its scenery. The sight of Trafoi, when one enters it, — as is frequently the case in coming from Meran, — just as the sunset glow is reddening its snow-covered amphitheatre, is a wonderful revelation of supernal beauty. I have led thither more than one American friend, whose eyes have filled with tears before this vision of surpassing loveliness. Trafoi may be called the Tyrolese Chamonix. The gorge in which it lies is narrower than the valley of its Alpine rival, it is true; but for that very reason the mighty ice floods, which seem poised above it, are nearer to the visitor here than are the Mer de Glace and Argentière to the inhabitants of Chamonix; while close to Trafoi, also, is the noble Ortler, which dominates this landscape from its vast white throne with hardly less of royal splendor than is shown by the great sovereign of the western Alps, Mont Blanc. Moreover, there are striking points of resemblance between these highest peaks, respectively, of Switzerland and the Tyrōl, and though the latter attains the altitude of only about thirteen thousand feet, its glorious summit, mitred with millennial snows, is undeniably sublime.

THE APPROACH TO TRAFOI.

Perhaps the only adverse criticism to be passed on Trafoi is the appalling nearness of the mountains in whose ice-mailed grasp it seems to lie. To stand here, on the hotel balcony, at night, when the dark cañon far below is black with shadows, while all the upper world is radiant with the whiteness of the moon, is something overwhelming in its grandeur and solemnity. Yet there is mingled with the scene's unearthly beauty a suggestion of the terrible. For the extremities of the long glaciers creeping toward the valley seem like the tentacles of a gigantic octopus, thrusting its glittering arms out toward the little hamlet to seize it with relentless grip and drag it to those gaping jaws into whose blue-green depths the moonlight weirdly falls.

Trafoi, however, though lying at the foot of the Stelvio, is far from being a mere temporary station for a single night, with no resources in itself to hold and entertain the tourist. Like Chamonix, it offers to the visitor many notable excursions to the heights; while, only a few hours distant from it by an admirable car-

THE GLACIERS AND HOTEL TRAFOI.

THE KOENIGSPITZE AND GLACIERS SEEN FROM SULDEN.

riage road, lies Sulden, on the other side of the Ortler, the sight of which from that point, together with the panorama of the famous Koenigspitze and its glaciers, are by some deemed finer than the views obtainable at Trafoi. Personally, I prefer to linger in the latter place, and to drive thence occasionally to the Sulden valley.

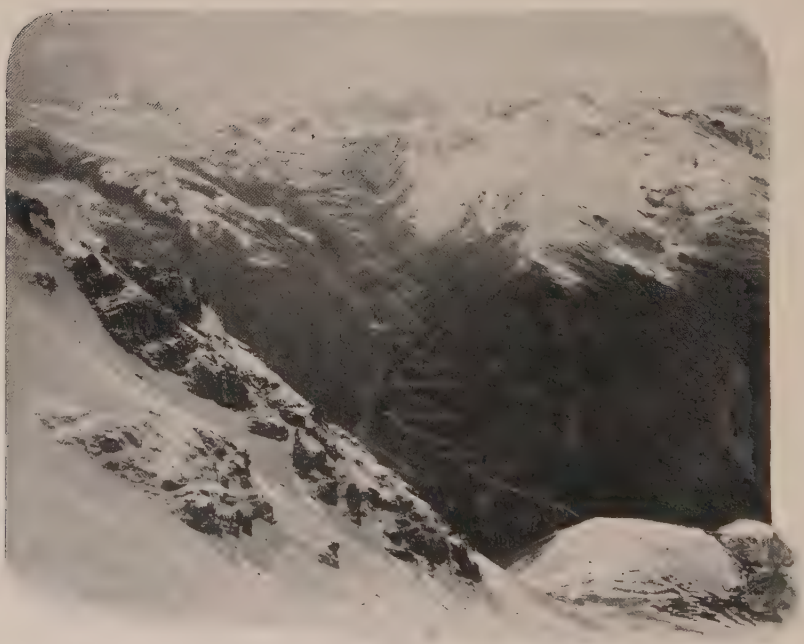
It is, however, the especial glory of Trafoi that it is the starting-point for the crossing of the Stelvio. I know not how to speak in moderation of this royal road. Yet if I praise it in superlatives, it is not the result of limited experience. Having been always a believer in seeing Switzerland from a carriage and on foot, rather than in hurrying through its finest areas by rail, I have repeatedly crossed in diligence or carriage, the St. Gotthard, Simplon, Splügen, Furca, and Great St. Bernard. Hence with the liveliest recollections of those routes, I nevertheless would give the palm for beauty and sublimity to the

CLIMBING THE ORTLER.

Stelvio. Nor is this eulogy enough; for, on account of the nearness and extent of its stupendous snow and glacial scenery, I think it more imposing *than all the other Alpine routes combined.*

This is not strange. For since it reaches an elevation of nine thousand two hundred feet, it is the highest carriage road in Europe, surpassing both the St. Gotthard and Splügen by twenty-two hundred, and the Simplon by twenty-six hundred, feet. The route itself is a marvel of engineering skill and perfect workmanship. Firm, broad, and smooth, it zigzags up the fearful cliffs in leagues of easy serpentines, bordered alike by precipice and parapet. Where landslips have been feared, immense retaining walls protect the soil above it and below. Do mountain torrents sweep across its path? In all such places massive culverts have been built to guide the furious floods beneath the untouched thoroughfare. Do avalanches threaten it? Then from these cliffs themselves huge galleries have been hewn

THE STELVIO ROAD AND ONE OF THE ORTLER GLACIERS.



THE STELVIO ROAD, SEEN FROM THE ORTLER.

STELVIO SERPENTINES.

and blasted, from whose protecting roofs the deluge slides off harmlessly into the depths. I know nothing finer in the art of road-making than is presented by the Stelvio. Yet, though improvements and repairs are always being made, this route is not a modern one. It was completed by the Austrians in 1825 for military purposes, and offered formerly the best facilities for hurrying troops from the Tyrōl to Lombardy. Even now grim fortresses defend it, as they do all Alpine passes which connect the neighboring countries, — Austria, Switzerland, and Italy. But now the only conflicts likely to occur here are those which take place in the winter months, when man has left the highway to its fate, and when the winds from Italy, Switzerland, and Austria meet here, like packs of howling wolves, and do their utmost to destroy it.

All carriage traffic ceases here at the beginning of October. Those who attempt to cross it after that on foot know that they do so at the peril of their lives. Yet every year the Stelvio

claims its victims. For every autumn, thousands of Italian laborers, who have spent the summer in Switzerland or Austria, return by one of the great passes. Some of them start too late, and are overtaken by a tempest on the winding route. What such a storm can be at these great elevations, even in October, the reader of the author's Swiss experience on the St. Bernard may possibly recall. Moreover, these poor Italians are all thinly clad, with usually nothing on their shoulders but a sack containing bread, a flask of wine, and the small savings they are carrying to their families. Hence, if an Alpine blizzard bursts upon them, they are liable to perish quickly. The snow at such a height does not descend in large flakes, leisurely, as in the valleys. It is a whirlwind of sharp particles of ice, which cut the skin and penetrate the clothing like a frozen sand. The hair, beard, eyes, and ears are filled with it. The very eyelashes are turned to miniature icicles. Bewildered by the blinding sleet, the wretched victims can no longer see the road, still less the gulf that yawns beneath it; and, after staggering on for a few paces, freezing, benumbed, and beaten into breathlessness by the resistless wind, they sink at last with a despairing moan into the whirling snow, which in a moment wraps them in a shroud. Happily, in such cases, torpor quickly lulls them to a sleep from which they pass unconsciously to death. Next

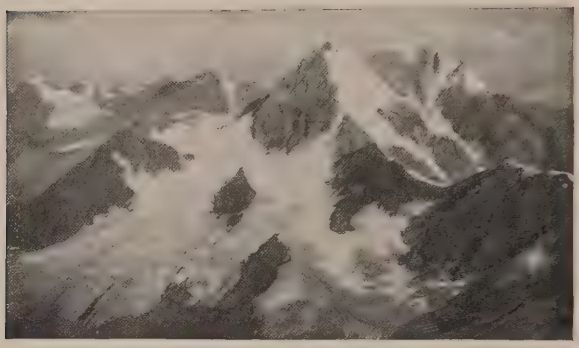
THE TRAFOI VALLEY AND THE ORTLER.

spring, when the returning sun melts the great mounds of ice away, their bodies will be found, unnamed, unclaimed, and unremembered — poor, fallen soldiers in humanity's hard battle for existence.

Occasionally, on this route, the patient horses have to rest; sometimes for a few moments only, as at the point of observation known as the "White Knot," where, on a bluff directly opposite the Ortler, an obelisk has been erected to the honor of Joseph Pichler, the first to reach its icy crest in 1804. A longer halt of about two hours must be made at Franzenshöhe, where tourists arriving from the Tyrolese side find a good meal awaiting them at the mountain inn. Then comes the last ascent of about two thousand feet, accomplished by six miles of winding curves. Yet these repeated zigzags are not in the least monotonous; for with each loop of the ascending road we gain a broader vista, until the climax is attained when we at last emerge upon the crest, and find ourselves on the triangular apex of three countries, — the Empire of Austria, the Kingdom of Italy, and the Commonwealth of Switzerland.

A CRADLE OF THE STORMS: THURWEISERGIPFEL NEAR THE STELVIO.

But it is not the lower world of men that holds us captive here. The sweet, white peace of the high Alps invades and dominates the soul. In a pure, stainless air, which we inhale more rapidly, perhaps, and yet with keen delight, we look upon a vast horizon walled with snow-white towers, domed by a sapphire sky. So many are these ice-clad peaks and sparkling minarets, that they suggest a great white city of the upper world. The Ortler is its royal palace, whose colossal roof, supported by huge, glassy walls, is rimmed by miles of spotless cornices, and leagues of elfin ara-



STAINLESS SNOWFIELDS OF THE UPPER AIR.

THE "WHITE KNOT," AND MONUMENT TO THE CONQUEROR OF THE ORTLER.

THE ORTLER GROUP, FROM ITALY.

besques. The lesser structures compass it in silent grandeur, seeming to stand in a gigantic garden of the northern gods, where trees are pyramids of ice, and paths are valleys of untrodden snow, and where the lawns are glaciers spangled with innumerable crystal flowers. So glorious is this panorama that we are loath to leave it; though well aware that the descending road (no less superbly built than that we have ascended) will lead us to the softness of Italian skies and Como's castled lake. We ask ourselves, with sad misgiving, if we shall ever gaze on such a scene again; for even should we once more stand upon this height, who can assure us that the same unclouded sky would give perfection to the prospect? Hence we desire to linger till its splendor pales, or veils itself in

FRANZENSHOHE ON THE STELVIO.

A GARDEN OF THE NORTHERN GODS: THE ORTLER, KOENIGSPITZE, CEVEDALE, ETC.

clouds. But no! the time to leave it is precisely when the tide of inspiration is bearing us exultantly upon its flood.

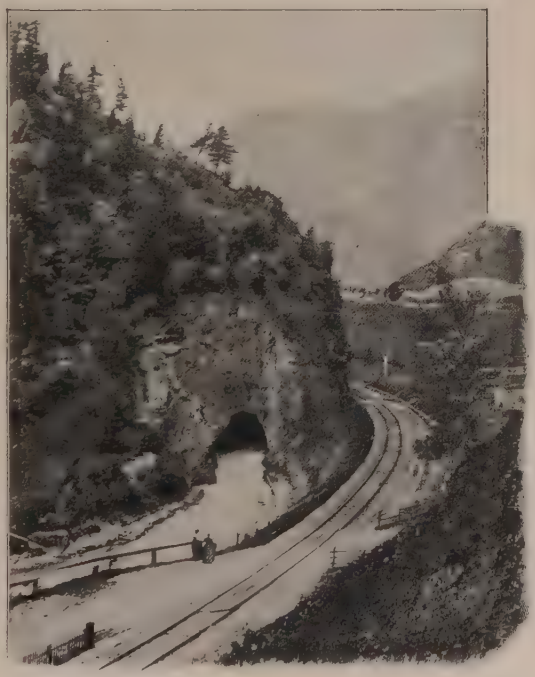
Thus would I fain remember it, till earthly scenes are fading from my vision, and the dark valley lies before me, leading on to the unknown. If there be yet reserved for me in the vast universe a grander pageant of sublimity, the recollection of this scene will have prepared me to enjoy it. If not, the memory of it, clinging to my consciousness, may nevertheless continue to delight me ages hence — surviving both the dissolution of the body and the wreck of worlds.

AROUND LAKE GARDA

THE BAY OF SALO.

Around Lake Garda

A MIGHTY chain of snow-crowned mountains stretches from east to west across Tyrolean territory, dividing it into two great sections, — North and South Tyrōl. One side of this huge watershed supplies the Danube in its course to the Black Sea; the other sends its melting snows first through the Eisack, subsequently through the Adige River to the Adriatic. At one point this imposing mountain wall is pierced by a deep gorge, which, though itself attaining a height of forty-five hundred feet, has nevertheless from earliest times furnished that easiest thoroughfare from central Europe to the plains of Lombardy, known as the Brenner Pass. At the northern terminus of this route is situated Innsbruck, the Tyrolean capital; while at its southern extremity, thirty-six hundred feet below the summit, and in a sumptuous plenitude of vines, figs, olives,



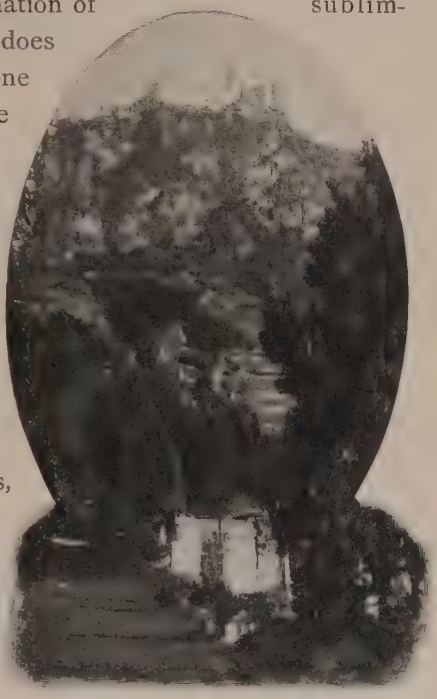
BRENNER AND EISACK.

BRENNER BAD, NEAR THE SUMMIT OF THE BRENNER PASS.

cypresses, and fruit gardens, lies Botzen — the half-Italianized metropolis of South Tyrōl. Through this old city, and directly over the Brenner, runs north and south one of the most important railway lines in Europe, with through cars daily during the entire year between Verona and Berlin; while, in the winter, over the same line a train with sleeping carriages and dining car runs several times a week between the Prussian capital and Palermo, crossing the Straits of Messina, to and from Sicily, on ferry-

boats. The Old World offers many illustrations of magnificent engineering skill in the successful passage of its mountains by the iron horse; but, notwithstanding many difficulties which at first seemed insurmountable on account of the friable nature of the stone, and which necessitated more than once the turning of the river from its course, to lay the rails within its former bed, the Brenner was among the first to bind with bands of steel the hostile forces of the Alps.

Moreover, none of the other Alpine railways can exhibit in its course so rare a combination of sublimity and beauty; for nowhere does the Brenner climb above the zone of ample vegetation, and hence the traveler is always either in the presence of green meadows, Spanish chestnut groves, fruits, flowers, and farms, or else is shadowed by majestic pines and firs, which point still higher to the regions of eternal snow. The Brenner, too, is lined with an unbroken series of castles, convents, and romantic ruins; and these, together with the foaming waters of the Eisack, which the railroad crosses often and accompanies ever, keep the delighted tourist always on the alert. It has been my privilege to make the passage of the Brenner frequently and at all seasons of the year; yet so perennial is its charm that it is difficult to say at what time it is most attractive. I think, however, that on a beautiful winter day,



OLD CONVENT NEAR KLAUSEN, ON THE BRENNER.

immediately after a snow-storm, when millions of coniferæ, bowed down beneath their crystal burdens, render the mountains dazzling with silver-powdered forests and pyramids of prisms, this journey offers one of the most glorious sights that I have ever looked upon. The great majority of travelers cross the Brenner at the rate of thirty miles an hour, and hence gain only glimpses of enchanting panoramas, which, like the brilliant particles in a kaleidoscope, change forms and places every moment as they move. But those who take the time to drive along its admirable carriage road will evermore congratulate themselves on being wise enough to substitute the landau for the railway car. For this old thoroughfare is a thread on which are strung the souvenirs of two thousand years. Its cliffs have echoed to the shouts of Roman legions, and milestones of the time of Caracalla and Septimius Severus have

WAIDBRUCK, ON THE BRENNER.

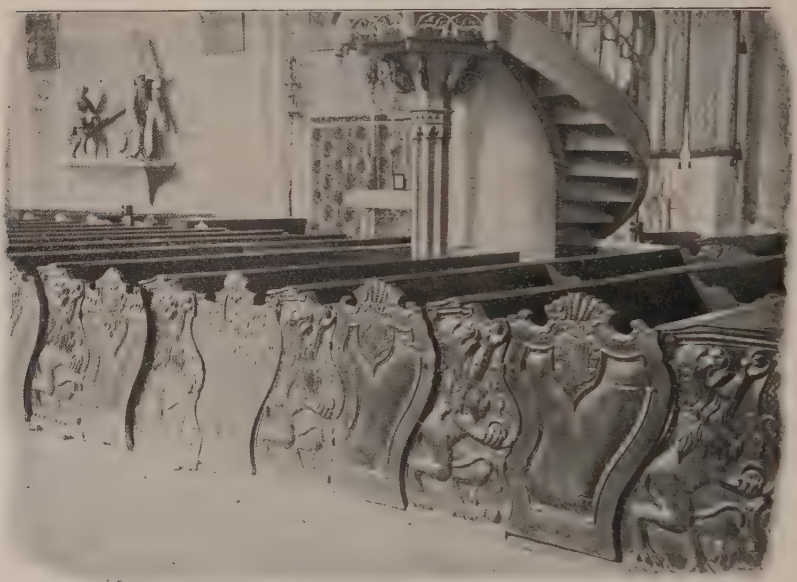
"SILVER POWDERED FORESTS AND PYRAMIDS OF PRISMS."

been found embedded in its soil. The forms of many of the greatest actors in the drama of humanity have moved between its rugged walls, leaving behind them memories that now lie superimposed on one another, like geological strata in the rocks that saw them pass. The Tyrolese eagle builds its nest among these crags; and for the freedom which it represents, Andreas Hofer and his valiant followers fought in desperation here, in 1809, against a foreign foe; and many of the boulders, now lying in the stream, then served as terrible engines of destruction, rolled down by the infuriated peasants on the French invaders, who were here crushed by them like insects, till the torrent of the Eisack was crimsoned with their blood. The Brenner is the Tyrolese Thermopylæ.

But even if the tourist cannot drive leisurely along this famous route, should he elect to make the trip in sections, leaving the train occasionally, to resume his journey at a later hour or on the following day, he will discover scores of interest-

RAILWAY AND CARRIAGE ROAD ALONG THE BRENNER.

ing objects to reward his efforts; while almost every station is a starting-point for an excursion up a lateral valley. I have in my library a German book of nearly two hundred and fifty pages, in fine print, exclusively devoted to a critical study of "Art along the Brenner"; so rich in architecture, painting, woodcarving, and historic value are many of the monasteries, castles, churches, cemeteries, old inns, houses, gates, and towers existing in the towns between the Tyrolese capi-



WOODCARVING IN THE CHURCH AT STERZING, ON THE BRENNER.

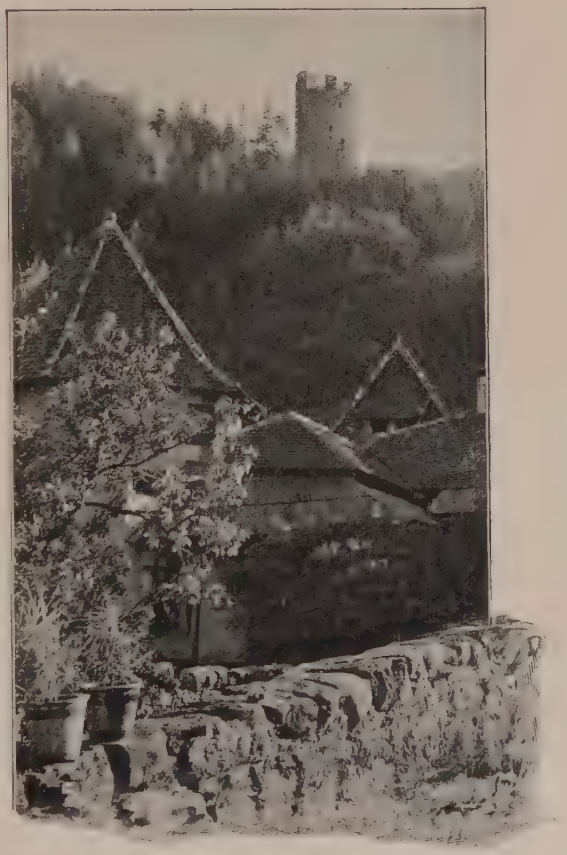
tal and Botzen! The latter city itself might well detain one for some time, if he would study its old streets and buildings, and appreciate their history. For Botzen (the Pons Drusi of the Romans) has played a prominent part in the development of southern Europe. Bordering the shortest highway between Germany and Italy, it has seen millions of the human family enter and leave its gates; from fierce barbarians, swooping vulture-like on Italy, to emperors, kings, popes,

A FIFTEENTH-CENTURY DINING HALL AT KLAUSEN, BRENNER.

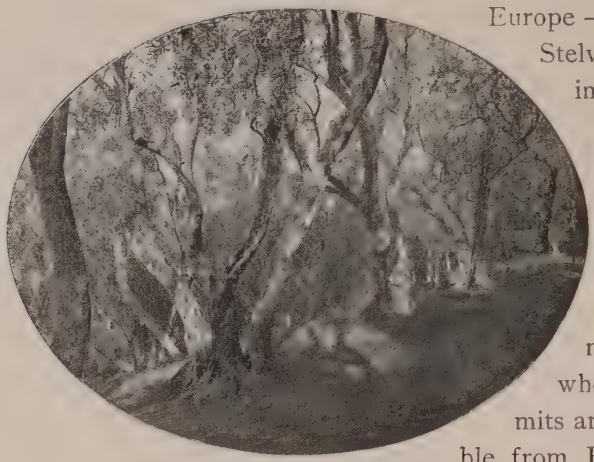
bishops, princes, soldiers, and crusaders, coming and going, in wars, embassies, and pilgrimages without number.

Geographically, Botzen may be called the heart of the Tyrōl. At all events, on arriving there the tourist finds himself at a remarkably central starting-point for driving to many of the most important scenic and historic features of the land. And, parenthetically, let me add, that while deciding in what order these attractive places should be visited, one can be lodged in this small Tyrolese city in a new hotel, which, in its sumptuously appointed restaurant and reading room, its rich mahogany woodwork, its bedroom furniture of the same costly material, its beautiful, artistic, stained glass — a product of Tyrolean industry — together with the handsome tiling extending through the corridors, staircases, and bathrooms, is not surpassed in any city in America. In fact, for tastefulness and elegance, I have rarely seen its equal in any portion of the world.

It is at Botzen that the route begins which leads one to such points of interest as Meran, the Vintschgau valley, the home of Andreas Hofer in Passeier Thal, and the highest carriage road in



OLD ROMAN TOWER NEAR WAIDBRUCK, ON THE BRENNER.



AN OLIVE GROVE NEAR ARCO.

Europe — the majestic Stelvio. Moreover, in the opposite direction, rises that marvelous portion of the Alpine world known as the Dolomites, some of whose colored summits are distinctly visible from Botzen's streets, and to the very centre of whose splendor one can drive thence in five hours. A little to the southwest, also, is the celebrated Mendel Pass, which can be quickly reached, either by a newly opened electric road or a superbly constructed driveway, leading to the lovely region of Madonna di Campiglio bordering Italy. Furthermore, many interesting castles are within easy access of this city, and not far distant, toward the south, lies exquisite Lake Garda, in whose sapphire depths the Tyrolese moun-

OLD GOTHIC CHURCH, AND VOGELWEIDE'S STATUE, BOTZEN.

tains sink to rest. Amid so much to choose from, it is difficult to decide here whither to travel first; but we may well select Lake Garda as offering variety between the Ortler mountains, which we have already visited, and the fantastic Dolomites, which we are yet to see. Our route to it lies down the natural prolongation of the Brenner Pass — a broad and fruitful valley, which, after leaving Botzen, rapidly descends between two parallel mountain ranges to the Lombard plain. The river Eisack still accompanies us, but it no longer has an individual existence, having at Botzen given up its name. For there the united Etsch and Passer, rolling swiftly down from their respective valleys, which meet each other at Meran, join forces with the wild child of the Brenner, their triune volume being thenceforth known as the Adige.

AN OLD INN AT BOTZEN.

A little more than thirty miles below their point of union, and just before we leave the valley for Lake Garda, we reach a city so conspicuously picturesque, with towers, battlements, and walls, that it deserves from every tourist more than a passing glance; for this is not alone the second largest city in Tyrōl, but is the old Tridentum of the Romans, the shortened syllables

of whose ancient name are now heard in our own concise word Trent, and in the softer Italian title Trento. The frontier line, which, after the victories of Louis Napoleon and Victor Emmanuel, had to be drawn anew between United Italy and Austria, left Trent some twenty-five miles north of the Italian boundary. One naturally feels, on this account, a certain amount of sympathy for its inhabitants: not that their lot is any harder under Austrian than it would be under Italian government, but from

TRENT, AND THE VALLEY OF THE ADIGE.

the fact that Trent seems naturally to belong to Italy. One hears in its cafés, shops, streets, and churches practically nothing but Italian; and its piazzas, market-places, and old marble palaces give it a close resemblance to Verona. Moreover, the principal modern monument in Trent is not the statue of some famous Austrian, but a memorial in bronze of the great Florentine poet, Dante.

There is a melancholy sense of faded glory and of vanished

THE MEMORIAL TO DANTE AT TRENT.

grandeur in this ancient city. Its site is one of those which civilized men inevitably choose for an abode; and, lying, as it does, directly on an international highway, it has had for two millenniums an eventful history. Hence, if some Tyrolese Walter Scott should undertake to write romantic stories, based upon the battles, feuds, crimes, glories, and imposing pageants which

this frontier town has witnessed, he would find ready to his hand as much material as Scotland's border land furnished for the Waverley novels. But of that olden time little remains in architecture save an outer shell of former power and splendor. Most of its stately palaces — well worthy of a place in Genoa or Florence — have fallen into sad decay, or are now used as banks and shops; while the Palazzo Tabarelli, designed by the illustrious architect Bramante, the predecessor of Michael Angelo in the building of St. Peter's, has been transformed into a restaurant. Even the massive castle, once the lordly residence of the prince-archbishops who ruled the entire Trientino district for more than seven centuries, is now dilapidated, and its old Roman tower looks down no longer on a splendid court of temporal and spiritual sovereigns, but on the barracks of an Austrian garrison.

THE PALAZZO TABARELLI

But that which gives to Trent its greatest prominence in history is the ecclesiastical council, held here in the sixteenth century. Far be it from the author to allow himself to make the least digression here into the barren field of theological controversy. Suffice it only to remark that this great convocation of cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops, together with twenty-nine ambassadors from secular princes, had for its pri-

mary purpose to bring about, if possible, some reconciliation between the newborn Protestantism of Luther and the Church of Rome, and to avert the perils of a crisis, which had already passed from words to deeds, and threatened Europe with religious war. Tedious and long had been the diplomatic wrangling as to a suitable city for this ecumenical assembly — the German emperor and princes objecting to its being held upon Italian soil, the Pope as strenuously opposing any site in Germany. Finally Trent — a city of Tyrōl — was chosen as the result of mutual concessions; and, after many postponements and delays, the famous council was convened in 1545, a few months previous to the death of Luther. It may be said to have been in session here for eighteen years; for whatever meetings it did hold took place in this city, and it was not officially disbanded until 1563. But during that long period it had many interruptions, one of which lasted for ten years.

The meeting-place of these ecclesiastics was the still attractive church of Santa Maria Maggiore; but one can hardly realize

THE OLD CASTLE OF THE PRINCE-BISHOPS, TRENT.

CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA MAGGIORE, TRENT.

now that it was ever such an arena of debate. Into its sacred stillness come to-day no echoes of the storms of furious invective and anathema which raged within its marble walls so fiercely and so long. The princes of the Church have left it in possession of the Prince of Peace. No doubt to those who gathered here, and whose impassioned words resounded through these aisles, Christianity seemed threatened with complete destruction, unless the dogmas which they advocated were fastened on men's minds forever; and, above all, unless the heresy of the Reformation, then sweeping over Europe, should be utterly annihilated. But, sitting recently within this ancient sanctuary, hearing the solemn requiem mass performed for the repose of the soul of the late pontiff, Leo XIII., I could detect in the impressive ritual no diminution in the pomp, or changes in the doctrines, of Catholicism during the fateful centuries which have come and gone since the Tridentine fathers issued their decrees. The march of Protestantism, too, has steadily gone on, until it numbers now about one hundred and twenty million souls; yet neither Christianity nor the Roman Catholic Church has perished. Mankind is slowly learning that every great religion that is destined to survive must be sufficiently broad to tolerate many different views, and various forms of

worship and of government. Religion needs no sword or fagot for its preservation. The age of blood and torture for suspected heresy has passed away. The spirit of Christ is broader than all creeds, and will outlive all controversies; even as the vault of heaven is greater than all passing clouds, and will be found still holding in its vast embrace our rolling orb, when short-lived, earthborn vapors shall have vanished with the rising sun.

Not far from Trent we come in sight of an enormous mountain, known as Monte Baldo; which, forty miles in length,

OLD BUILDINGS, TRENT.

and seven thousand feet in height, divides the valley of the Adige from the long, similar depression in which lies Lake Garda. To pass from one of these valleys to the other, the traveler must either go around the southern extremity of Monte Baldo by the way of Italy, or else ascend the northern slope of the mountain by means of a convenient pass, and drop, as from

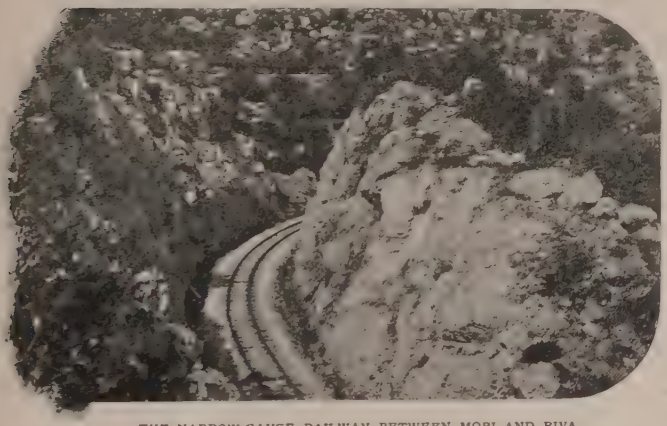
ON THE CARRIAGE ROAD TO LAKE GARDA.

the clouds, upon the upper end of the lake at Riva. Deciding on the latter course, we left the Brenner railway at a little town called Mori, and seated ourselves in one of a series of diminutive cars, whose size appeared inexplicable till we learned that they were built expressly for the narrow-gauge track connecting the two cañons. On this, indeed, we soon began the ascent. Our locomotive panted with the effort; but what is its achievement here compared with that of the Venetians, who, in 1439, in order to avenge a most disastrous defeat inflicted on them by the Milanese, not only brought a fleet of half-a-dozen war galleys and twenty-five smaller craft up the Adige as far as Mori, but thence by means of rollers and a host of men, together with a force of two thousand oxen, actually dragged them up this mountain side until they reached the saddle of the crest, when they were carefully lowered by ropes and rollers to the lake! It was a task of fourteen days, and cost an enormous sum of money; but the result completely justified the boldness and extravagance of the undertaking, for in the following year the Venetians,

RIVA AND MONTE BALDO.

aided by their imported galleys, vanquished their former conquerors, and gained again possession of the lake. Over the route, where once these strange, amphibious monsters crawled, our toy train wriggled recklessly to right and left, curving and climbing simultaneously, through orchards, villages, and vineyards, until it finally had screwed itself along its light-railed path from the luxuriant vegetation of the plain to a gray wilderness of stone.

A WILDERNESS OF STONE.



THE NARROW-GAUGE RAILWAY BETWEEN MORI AND RIVA.

The scene of desolation that presents itself a little below the summit of the pass is both surprising and impressive. Contrasted with the vales of paradise on either side, the apex of this watershed resembles an abode of demons. In fact, more than five hundred years ago the poet Dante found the scene so grewsome that at the opening of the

twelfth canto of his "Inferno" he compared the place to the part of Hell he was describing. For, as he passed a portion of his exile under the protection of his friends, the Scaligers, near Trent and on the border of Lake Garda, he knew this region well, and likened it appropriately to the rough descent into the seventh circle of the nether world. The language which he used in reference to these rocky fragments,

"Loosened by earthquake, or for lack of prop,"

shows that he deemed this devastation due to a landslip; but, as we soon shall see, a part of it, at least, was

AN ANCIENT CASTLE OF THE SCALIGERS, NEAR LAKE GARDA.

caused by glacial moraine. The earth has undergone some terrible convulsions here. Some of the mountain strata have been folded back toward one another like the letter S; and not a few of their gigantic layers writhe, rear, and crawl away, like hideous, primeval monsters, wounded unto death. Between these tortured cliffs the carriage road and railway coil and uncoil, like two friendly serpents, through a labyrinth of boulders, now piled in heaps, now scattered broadcast, as if a host of heaven-scaling Titans had been here bombarded by the angry gods. Yet, happily, the horror of the place is not without alleviation.

A pretty sheet of water, called Lake Loppio, lies in the midst of all this chaos, reflecting faithfully the world of stone, and yet so brilliant in its color, and so artistically marked by curving channels, cut between its tiny islands, that it suggested to my mind an emerald intaglio — a flawless masterpiece of Nature, dropped and forgotten here amid the vaster and more serious works on which she was engaged. For very serious was the work accomplished in this region during that epoch of our

LAKE LOPPIO AND THE SERPENTINE.

planet's life preceding or attending man's appearance on its surface.

The country near Lake Garda is a spot where one may read in the rolled pebble and the traveled boulder, in slanting strata and in grooved ravine, a portion of the story of our cooling globe, and some of the mysterious secrets of its awful past. Thus the first view of Arco and the valley of the Sarca, terminating in Lake Garda, is geologically as interesting as it is

enchanting in its beauty. A richly cultivated plain of semi-tropical vegetation is outspread before us, framed on three sides by rugged picturesque mountains; while on the fourth, beyond a rock-ribbed hill, which lies tipped over on its side like a dismasted wreck, laughs in the golden sunshine of the south the dimpled surface of the lake. Its water covered once the entire valley. Where Arco's dainty villas stand, fish sported in the waves; and the precipitous rocks, which form a startling feature

ARCO, AND THE VALLEY OF THE SARCA.

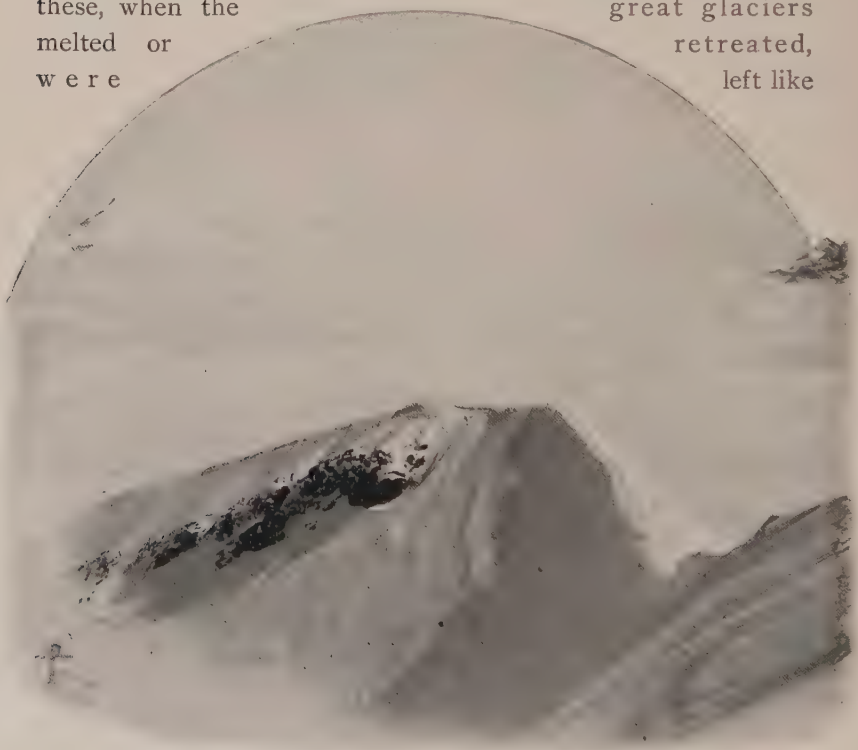
of the landscape, were then small islands, whose sheer cliffs, five or six hundred feet in height, towered above the lake's blue mirror as they do to-day above the plain. Gradually, however, the river Sarca, which is born among the glaciers of the Ortler range, built up this broad, alluvial expanse by bringing hither during many centuries débris and rubble from the Tyrolese mountains. Spreading this out in layers, with a steadily increasing slope, it forced the water to retreat.

But this is nothing to the earlier changes in the valley's history. There is perhaps no part of Europe where the results of the great Ice Age are more clearly marked, and make a deeper impression on the mind, than South Tyrōl. What an appalling picture it presents when one imagines the stupendous sheet of ice that covered once the whole of northern Europe and the corresponding latitude of North America! This ice cap is computed to have been a mile and a quarter thick in Norway, and even in northern Germany to have had a depth of fifteen hundred feet. The amount of ice among the Alps at that time is almost inconceivable, unless one can in fancy transport himself in a balloon to such a height that the earth's crust appears to him like the skin of a wrinkled apple. Only the highest peaks then rose above the glacial sea enshrouding Switzerland, much as we may have seen them, from the summits of the Rigi or Pilatus, piercing an ocean of sun-tinted clouds ere the day's warmth had caused the vapors to retire. The glaciers of today appear gigantic when we, pygmy-like, attempt to cross their riven surfaces, and with reason, for some of them even now are more than thirteen hundred feet in depth, and it has been

ARCO, AND ITS CLIFFS.

calculated that the ice of the Gorner glacier at Zermatt would be sufficient to build three cities of the size of London!

Yet even these colossal streams are but the shrunken rivulets of those which once ground slowly through the yielding gorges to the sea. The valleys of Tyrōl and of the Bernese Oberland were filled then to the brim with solid ice which, through the pressure of the monster snow-fields of the upper world, were driven downward with a slow but irresistible momentum. Like glittering plowshares, often miles in breadth and thousands of feet thick, these mighty agents furrowed out the valleys to still greater depths, and carved the Alpine pyramids to something like their present shape, surmounting easily the lesser mountains in their path, as rivers rise and ripple over rocks. Embedded in these viscous floods lay thousands of huge boulders, which, wrenched away from the adjoining cliffs, were borne like driftwood far from their original homes; and these, when the great glaciers melted or retreated, were left like

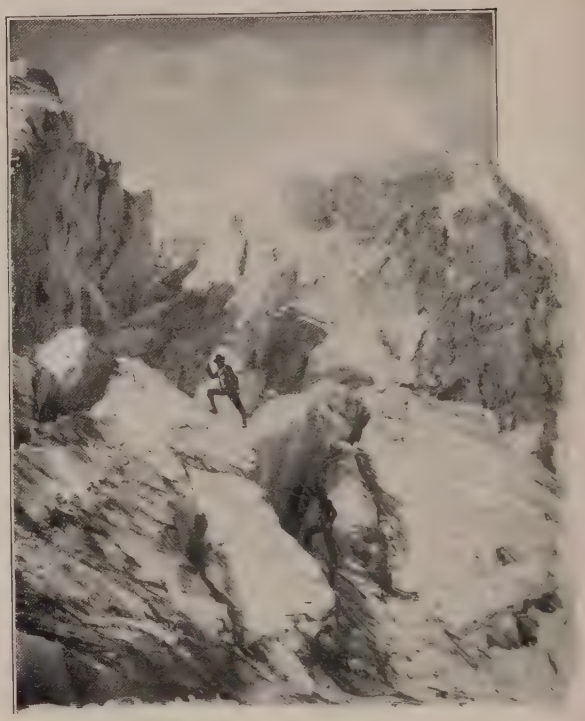


MOUNTAIN PEAKS EMERGING FROM A SEA OF CLOUDS.

stranded exiles where they chanced to be, completing thus a journey that had lasted possibly a thousand years. Thus, high up on the mountain sides above Lake Garda, rocks are found which could have had no other origin than the Engadine. One of these frigid monsters of the Ice Age, creeping down the Vintschgau valley, met in the neighborhood of Botzen an ally which had been stealing southward down the Brenner, and

A TYROLESE GLACIER OF TO-DAY.

these, uniting, filled the valley of the Adige. Meanwhile, a third of equal size was grooving out the channel of the Sarca from the Ortler Alps, and all of them reached such a height that, overflowing the pass between the Mori and the Riva of to-day, they met, and ultimately left a large proportion of the blocks that form the present stony desert round Lake Loppio. At that time, too, Lake Garda was a long fjord of the Adriatic, through which these glaciers made their exit oceanward.



AN ALPINE PLOWSHARE IN TYRÖL.

Fearful, indeed, must the huge mass of ice have been which plowed its pathway sunward through this narrow estuary. Tyndall has estimated that a glacier only one thousand feet in depth exerts on every square yard of its bed a pressure of four hundred and eighty-six thousand pounds. The monster that moved through this valley had, however, twice this thickness; and such was its enormous weight and force that it dug out the bed of the fjord to a depth of more than a thousand feet below the level of the sea. Naturally, therefore, when the ice subsided, it needed only a little accumulation of detritus at the southern end to separate this body of water from the Adriatic, and thus to change the fjord into a lake. Accordingly, this actually happened,

A STRANDED EXILE.

and now the surface of Lake Garda is only about two hundred feet above the sea, to which it sends its overflow by the river Mincio. Most of the salt-water fish remaining here after the separation naturally perished as the water freshened; but some varieties, having adapted themselves to their new environment, still exist here, thus furnishing additional zoölogical proof of the former union of the lake and sea.

Such thoughts give special interest to one's excursions about Arco, the charming little health resort which occupies the centre of the plain. Sunny and sheltered, near to the lake, yet far enough away to have a somewhat milder climate than is known at Riva, this pretty settlement of villas and hotels has visitors, and even permanent residents, during three quarters of the year. It may be called a miniature Meran, for it can boast of a casino, daily concerts, lovely walks, and other attractions similar, though on a smaller scale, to those described in connection with the former capital of the Tyrōl.

PROMENADE AT ARCO.

Excursions, too, abound in its vicinity, not the least interesting of which leads to its ruined castle, surmounting the extraordinary rock that dominates the town. This natural acropolis was, as we might expect, originally fortified by the

Romans; and subsequently the great Theodoric, ablest of all the Gothic kings whose power flourished on the ruins of imperial Rome, built here a stronghold whose foundations are still visible. Here, too, for more than six hundred years lived the redoubtable Counts of Arco, who played distinguished rôles in nearly all the conflicts and crusades which characterized the Middle Ages and the times of chivalry. Destroyed by the French in 1703, the sternness of this ancient castle has been softened by the well-kept garden that surrounds it, until its massive walls and towers, garlanded with vines and flowers, appear to be themselves a product of the soil. Standing amid these shattered battlements, and looking over the luxuriant plain toward the sweet, silvery silence of Lake Garda, the lonely rock suggested a colossal milestone in the passage of those prehistoric centuries, whose slow march saw the gradual evolution in this valley of an ice-filled fjord into the tranquil lake, which even now seems dreaming of that mother sea which it is destined never- more to join.

THE EYRIE OF THE COUNTS OF ARCO.

RIVA, VIEWED FROM LAKE GARDA.

Arco is not, however, the terminus of the railway; and the toy train, which glided down the mountain side from Loppio more nimbly than it climbed from the plain of Mori, brings us in fifteen minutes more to the extremity of the alluvial delta, where we alight at a romantically situated town, within whose streets we hear the throbbing chords of the guitar and whose soft name of *Riva* assures us we have reached at last *The Shore.*

I am seated in the picturesque old town of Riva, at the northern limit of Lake Garda — that glorious expanse of blue-green water, uniting the Tyrōl with Italy. It is the first of June. The "season" is over. The villas look deserted, and most of the hotels along the lake are closed. A few of the latter, however, remain open to receive travelers who, like myself, enjoy by preference their cool and silent corridors in the absence of a crowd. "It is too hot for the Italian Lakes," is what the followers of fashion always say when one proposes to visit them

FROM THE BOWER OF ROSES BY THE LAKE.

as late as this; just as Meran is called unbearable in summer, and Egypt unendurable in November — all of which statements I have long since found to be incorrect. At all events, I who have always wilted in New York's humid heat, find such a temperature as this delightful; nor would I hesitate to spend an entire summer at several points upon these charming shores. It is high noon, and I am writing, literally, in a bower of roses in the garden of the Hotel Lido, pausing occasionally to look out from beneath a fragrant dome of Jacqueminots and Maréchal Niels, through a long vista of green foliage to the multicolored lake. The mercury stands at seventy-five degrees, Fahrenheit, but a refreshing breeze steals inland from the water, conferring a delicious sense of coolness without the slightest apprehension of a chill. For here, as in most southern countries, all that is needed to be comfortable is to avoid the solar rays and court the shade, even if it be only that of a sun umbrella. Though this part of Lake Garda is Tyrolean territory, I feel already that I am in another land. The flow of language that I hear no longer breaks irregularly on Teutonic consonants, but ripples musically over

HOTEL LIDO AT RIVA.

the euphonious vowels of the tongue of Dante. Even when no words are spoken, the gestures are Italian. "A beautiful day," I said an hour ago, in his own language, to a fellow-idler on the shore. He gave a backward sweep of his wrist toward lake and mountains, half closed his eyes, and held his hand aloft in silent ecstasy. Nothing more was necessary. I understood that he was no less happy than myself amid such scenery, and I could have staked my life that, had he spoken, he would have answered me in Italian. Around me rise imposing mountains, sparkling here and there with the last vestiges of winter's snow; while at their feet, and partly in their shadow, lies the classic, southward-pointing lake, thirty-six miles in length, and varying in breadth from one and a half to nearly a dozen miles.

STREET MUSICIANS IN RIVA.

THE HARBOR OF RIVA, LAKE GARDA.

Lake Garda — as we call it — has borne various titles dur-

RUINS OF SCHLOSS GREIFENSTEIN, NEAR BOTZEN.

ing the two millenniums of its authentic history. Called by the Romans, Lacus Benacus, from the now-vanished city of Benacum on its western shore, its Gothic masters in the Middle Ages named it — from its great fertility and floral beauty — the Garden Sea; while the old town of Garda, near the "Garden" of mediæval legend, has given to the lake its present German appellation, Gardasee, as well as its Italian title, Lago di Garda. Of all the different names it has received, however, perhaps the most appropriate is that of the "Poets' Lake"; so many are the famous bards who have adorned its olive-silvered shores with wreaths of deathless song. Thus Virgil, who was born not far from its southern boundary, and spent his youth in its vicin-

THE GOETHE MEMORIAL.

ity, mentions its magnitude and the fierce storms which sometimes lash its surface into waves well worthy of the sea. Of Dante's reference to the savage scenery near Lake Loppio, we have already taken note; and of this beautiful expanse itself he also sings:

> "High in fair Italy there lies a lake,
> Under those Alps which gird the Teuton's land,
> Beyond Tyrōl; Benacus is its name."
>
> (L' Inferno, Canto 20.)

Catullus, sweetest of the Roman, and Tennyson, best beloved of English, lyric poets, have, as we soon shall see, identified themselves forever with its lovely promontory of Sirmione; while at this northern end of the lake, in the village of Torbole, accessible from Riva in half an hour by boat or carriage, we find an interesting souvenir of Goethe. In front of a now humble house in Torbole has been inserted a memorial tablet, on which

TORBOLE.

we read not merely the statement that in September, 1786, the German poet had his lodgings there, but also find recorded in the marble the following passage from his journal:

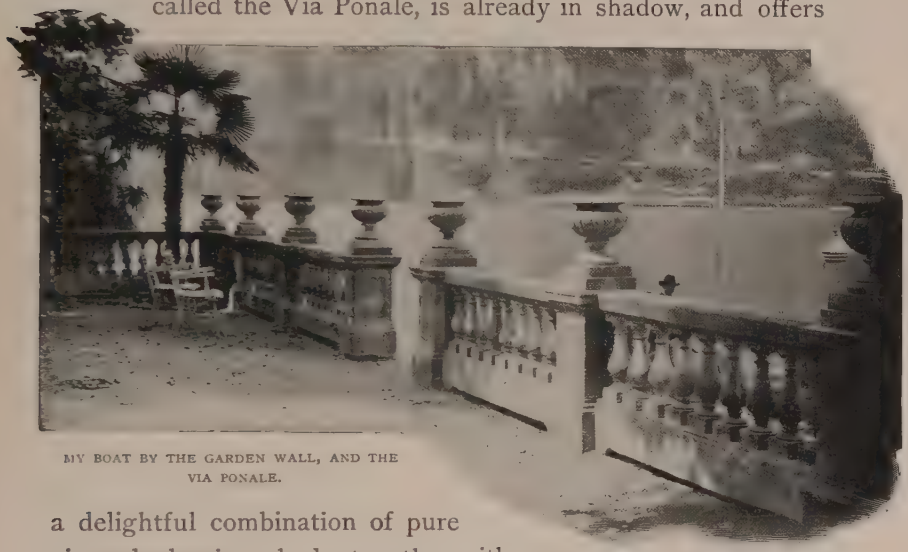
"To-day I have worked on 'Iphigenia,'
and in presence of the lake it has
gone forward finely."

Later, also, when in Rome, Goethe wrote further of his having penned the first lines of the new work "on the Gardasee, when the strong wind at noon drove the waves upon the shore."

THE HOTEL TERRACE AT TORBOLE.

The noon wind of which he speaks was not peculiar to his time, but is an interesting daily phenomenon, perhaps as old as the lake itself. This midday southern breeze, which comes with almost as much regularity as the ocean tides, is called the Ora, and is a perfect blessing to the "lake dwellers" of to-day,

since it brings warmth in the winter; while in the summer, freshened by its passage over the water, it bears upon its wings invigorating coolness. With equal punctuality, also, a north wind springs up about midnight, and blows for several hours for the benefit of sailing vessels bound for southern ports. While I have been writing the preceding lines the Ora has been growing stronger. The sparkling surface of the Gardasee is flecked with whitecaps, and wavelets lap impatiently the marble stairway of the hotel terrace. Directly opposite, on the western side of Riva's dainty harbor, the mountain driveway, called the Via Ponale, is already in shadow, and offers



MY BOAT BY THE GARDEN WALL, AND THE VIA PONALE.

a delightful combination of pure air and pleasing shade, together with magnificent views of the lake from an elevation. A quarter of an hour's sail in the little boat, lying invitingly by the garden wall, will bring us to the starting-point of the ascent, where many an expectant driver will await our patronage. *Andiamo!*

Riva's Via Ponale, which might be called a diamond edition of the Cornice Road, commences at the limit of the town, and is at first cut out of vertical cliffs for a considerable distance, like a slanting shelf. Later, it twists and turns through tunnels

and ravines, like a long, sinuous serpent, continually climbing higher and higher toward the falls of the Ponale River, which gives the thoroughfare its name. Thence bending sharply to the right, it leaves the lake, and passes up the pretty Ledro Thal. From time to time, alighting from the carriage, we leaned upon the broad, stone parapet, and gazed upon the sapphire plain hundreds of feet below our path. A pebble, dropped from my extended hand, fell to the water, unobstructed by a crag. Meanwhile, above us, on the other side of the route, gigantic precipices rose to dizzy heights, and not infrequently bent over us, like porticos. As we curved in and out of the indentations of this mountain wall, Lake Garda offered us a constant series of surprises. Each vantage-point disclosed a new variety of beauty, for the descending sun lit up with glory the stupendous mass of Monte Baldo on the opposite bank, and scattered broadcast such a wealth of colors as I have never seen surpassed. As far as the shadow of our mountain crept, the lake was of the deepest blue; but from that violet penumbra stretched away a labyrinth of exquisitely graded hues, whose fundamental tones were ultramarine and emerald, yet with which there were blended numberless other shades, caused by the swift, light touches of the wind and sun.

THE VIA PONALE, LOOKING DOWN THE LAKE

Moreover, through these tinted areas narrow paths of lapis-

lazuli and silver meandered here and there capriciously, as if the lake were a mosaic map, whose colored sections were marked off by lines of precious stones. In presence of so sumptuous a pageant I should have found it natural to meet enthusiastic painters here at every turn, profiting by a thousand subjects for pastels and aquarelles; but during the entire drive we saw not even an amateur. Yet Venice presents nothing finer or more tempting to an artist's brush than this resplendent Gardasee, especially when the adjoining mountains wear their crowns of snow, beneath which miles of perpendicular cliffs are purple to the water's edge. An added charm is given to the scene, when one or two fishing boats appear, gliding mysteriously round a distant headland, and looking with their red, blue, brown, or orange sails, like monster butterflies, skimming with gorgeous wings the mirror of the lake.

THE VIA PONALE, LOOKING TOWARD RIVA.

All these impressions are intensified when we explore Lake Garda in one of the graceful steamers whose keels cut, diamond-like, their furrows in the glassy flood; now curving eastward to some village nestling in a tiny bay, now darting thence diagonally to the western shore. Seen from a mountain summit, these boats resemble swallows in their zigzag flight.

Surpassing by a third the area of Lake Maggiore, the Gardasee is much the largest of the lakes of northern Italy, and in

A SHRINE ON THE VIA PONALE.

the inexhaustible variety of its brilliant colors is also the most beautiful. Its upper end is still Tyrolean, not alone politically, but in appearance. Near Riva it is purely a mountain lake, shut in by cliffs which give it quite the look of a Norwegian fjord. But in the south it broadens into a miniature, sunlit sea, whose shores recede and almost lose themselves in silvery haze. I might compare Lake Garda to a human face, marked by a lofty forehead, piercing eyes, and stern expression, yet tempered by a tender mouth, pos-

A SAILBOAT ON THE GARDASEE.

sessing a bewitching smile. This difference shows itself not only in the physical conformation of the country, but in the vegetation of its banks, which gradually changes as we sail from the bare mountains around Riva to luxuriant gardens, where oranges and lemons flourish in profusion, and roses bloom throughout the year, in that delightful region of fertility which Shelley calls

"The waveless plain of Lombardy."

CUTTING THEIR FURROWS IN THE GLASSY FLOOD.

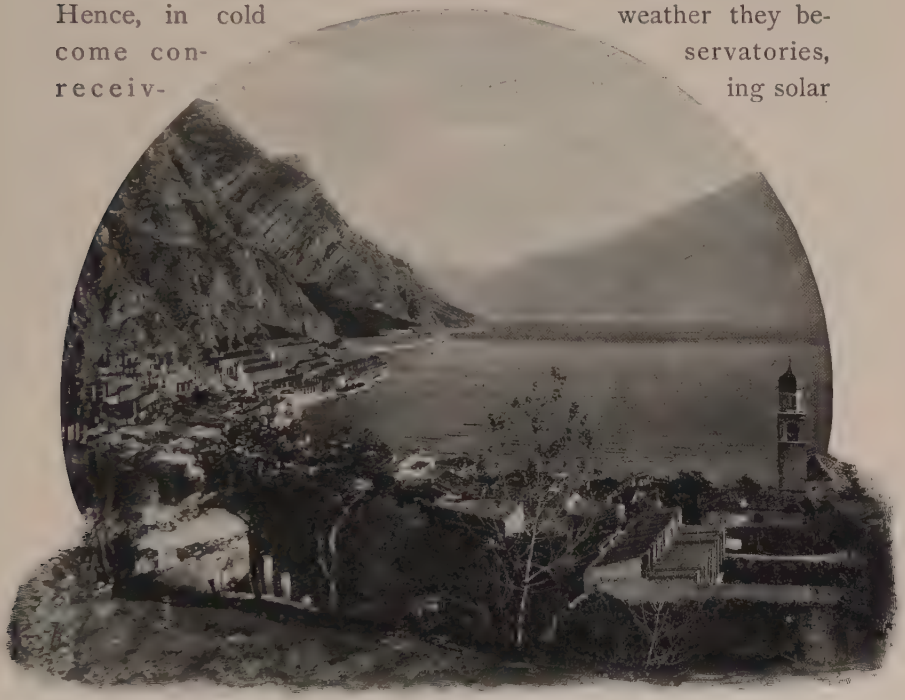
About an hour after leaving Riva we glide across an invisible line of demarcation, and are informed that we have left the empire of Franz Joseph, and are now in Italy. Nothing suggests the change, however, except the appearance of two rakish-looking craft, resembling torpedo boats, which every night cruise back and forth along the liquid frontier, directing search lights to the right and left, in order to detect and thwart any attempts at smuggling. For contraband traffic is encouraged here by heavy customs duties, and in the days before the advent of

CUSTOM HOUSE BOATS AT LIMONE.

these watchdogs of the lake, evaders of the law found this an admirable field for operations. With a swift boat, adventurous fishermen or sailors would sometimes gain thus, on a single dark or stormy night, more than they could have earned legitimately in a month. But with these fiercely brilliant eyes of science peering pitilessly into every cove and cranny of the cliffs, and lighting up the lake for miles, he would indeed be reckless who should try to smuggle now. The usual place of anchorage for these police boats is, naturally, the first Italian town to greet us after entering Victor Emmanuel's dominions, which is appropriately named Limone, from being the most northern point upon the lake where lemons are extensively cultivated.

Here, therefore, on a southward voyage, one makes his first acquaintance with the singular galleries, built solely to protect that fruit, and rarely visible elsewhere than on the western border of Lake Garda. Viewed from a distance,

they looked to me like miles of skeleton cages ranged in terraces along the shore; and even when we drew still nearer, their lines of cream-white columns suggested rows of gun-barrels in an arsenal. They are in reality arcades, made out of pillars of cemented bricks, each column being twenty feet in height and eight feet distant from its neighbor. They are connected by iron rails, upon which planks are laid in winter as a roof, while windows are inserted in the vertical spaces. Hence, in cold weather they become conservatories, receiving solar

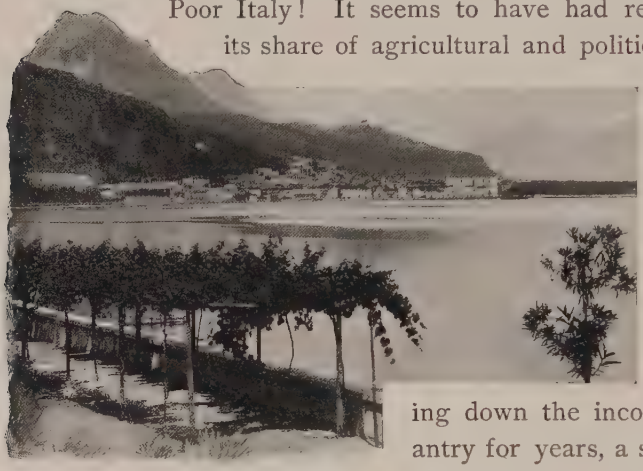


LEMON GALLERIES AT LIMONE.

light and heat through their glass screens in front, but walled up at both ends, and sheltered overhead by temporary coverings of boards. Seen close at hand, the golden fruit, hanging in clusters in this series of contiguous compartments, reminded me of ornaments displayed in the windows of suc-

cessive jewelry shops. The export of lemons has been for centuries a profitable business for the people of this region; but it is now precarious, partly because of cheaper means of transportation of the fruit from Sicily, and partly owing to the malady which recently attacked the trees.

Poor Italy! It seems to have had really more than its share of agricultural and political misfortunes. For in addition to the heavy taxes levied for the army, navy, and colonial schemes, which have been grinding down the income of the peasantry for years, a series of calamities, such as the illness of the silkworm, the blight of the vines, the injury to the mulberry trees, and the disease of the lemons, have caused so much distress that hundreds of formerly prosperous families in this vicinity have been reduced to poverty, and forced to sell their farms for merely nominal prices. It is little wonder, therefore, that thousands of the still more wretched peasants have been compelled to leave the country to avoid starvation, and that the largest number of immigrants to the United States is at present fur-



LEMON TERRACES AT MADERNO.

COMING UP WITH THE "ORA."

nished by Italy.[1] It is a significant fact that in parts of Italy there are now no singing birds, the lovely landscapes being strangely silent. There is in this respect a painful contrast between Tyrōl and Italy; for while the common people of the former country treat birds with the utmost kindness and feed them in the streets, the poor Italians catch as many as possible to sell, or kill them outright for the little food which they can furnish.

ONE OF THE HUNGRY.

Meanwhile, our steamer has been speeding to the opposite shore, to touch at the picturesque village of Malcesine, once rendered formidable through its stately castle, built by Charlemagne. This stands upon a

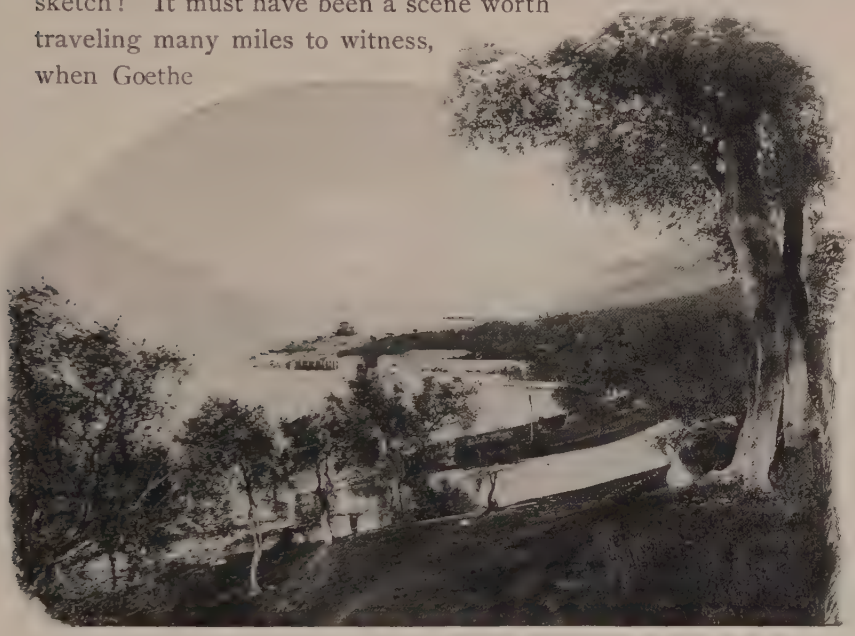
[1] According to official statistics, although between 1869 and 1880 the emigrants from Italy numbered only 120,000, in the year 1881 alone, 135,832 Italians left the mother country. Since then the emigration from the impoverished land has been increasing by leaps and bounds. Thus, in 1891, there left Italy 293,631 of her inhabitants; in 1896, 307,482; in 1901, 553,245; and in 1902, very nearly 600,000 souls.

narrow promontory, which cleaves the water like the prow of a warship; and it is not surprising that the nobly situated fortress so appealed to Goethe that he at once proceeded to make a sketch of it, forgetting that the act might look suspicious to the less æsthetic officials of the Venetian government. In fact, he had hardly finished a rough, preliminary draft of the building when a crowd began to assemble, whose leader asked him what he was about. Goethe replied

CASTLE AND PROMONTORY OF MALCESINE.

politely that he was merely sketching the ruined tower; but his interrogator rudely snatched away the paper, tore it up, and sent for the police. Absurd as the situation now appears, it was for a time a serious one for the author of "Faust"; for the authorities of the place declared their belief that he was an Austrian spy, who had come hither to construct a map of the frontier of the Venetian Republic to be used later by the Austrian emperor in some nefarious project of aggres-

sion. Goethe protested that he was a citizen of Frankfurt, had absolutely nothing to do with the Austrian government, was on his way to Italy to study art, and could not possibly have supposed that such a ruin as this ancient castle would be considered a fortress, a plan of which would be of service to an enemy. To this, however, the Podestà of Malcesine replied by asking scornfully what there could be in that old building worthy of a sketch! It must have been a scene worth traveling many miles to witness, when Goethe



MALCESINE, FROM THE SOUTH.

tried to explain to him, and incidentally to the assembled populace, the unappreciated beauties of this massive stronghold, which had survived the tempests of a thousand years. Whether it was the poet's eloquence or the corroboration of his statements by an Italian who was present that induced the judge to alter his opinion, is uncertain; but there can be no doubt that the great German narrowly escaped arrest, and probably a most unpleasant temporary imprisonment at Verona.

I shall never forget the charming picture that Malcesine presented to us as we left it in the afternoon, when the declining sun, streaming across the lake from the summits of the opposite mountains, transformed to glittering jewels the windows of its lofty tower, and shed a brilliant lustre over the olive groves which cover the ascending slopes for miles with their soft tints of silvery gray. It made us understand the longing for Italian scenery which Goethe puts into Mignon's touching song:

> "Know'st thou the land where bloom the citron bowers,
> Where the gold orange lights the dusky grove?
> High waves the laurel there, the myrtle flowers,
> And through a still, blue heaven the sweet winds rove;
> Know'st thou it well?"

Crossing Lake Garda once more from Malcesine, our steamer suddenly halts within the shadow of a monster cliff, upon whose edge, two thousand feet above our heads, a white church spire and a fringe of houses seem to be peering curiously at us over

BARDOLINO, ON LAKE GARDA. "KNOW'ST THOU THE LAND?"

the appalling precipice. This hamlet in the clouds is called Tremosine. A little boat comes out to us from the mountain's base, to take off one or two adventurous passengers and several sacks and boxes; but how they are to reach the village on the heights at first remains a mystery. At length, however, we detect a narrow trail, which might have been laid out originally by a chamois; and up its many zigzags, through a granite wilderness, the pilgrims to Tremosine will have to climb like goats, while all their baggage must be hauled up thither by strong wires and a windlass. Yet telegraph poles, which also scale this precipice, hint of a more important settlement than one can, from the lake, imagine possible. In fact, the breathless climber, when he sets his foot upon the summit, beholds to his astonishment a large plateau, with numerous orchards, olive groves, and vineyards, sheltered by other mountains, and irrigated by two limpid streams.

TREMOSINE.

Perhaps the loveliest, and certainly the most frequented, portion of Lake Garda is the shore line, known as the Riviera of Gardone. This lies within the curving arm of a southward-facing bay, and its entire bank is fringed with villas, hotels, and attractive gardens. Hither, in autumn, comes an ever increasing number of those who dread the cold and dampness of the north-

A PART OF THE RIVIERA OF GARDONE.

ern winters; and many of these votaries of the sun remain here till the month of April. Nor is it strange; for while this western shore of the Gardasee is well equipped with comfortable hotels, and is exempt from many of the annoyances of the Mediterranean Riviera, its midwinter temperature differs from that of Nice by only two degrees, and its vegetation and flora are identical. One feels the charm of Italy here no less than on the Lido or at Capri. The houses, with their gaily colored walls and frescos, set in graceful frames of oleanders and magnolias, are essentially Italian. So are the pilgrim shrines and churches, perched on isolated heights, and guarded by long lines of cypresses. Occasionally a tiny chapel rises from the water's edge, and the sweet face of a Madonna, or the figure of the Crucified, looks out upon the sapphire lake; and sometimes we discern a white-walled convent, like a spotless dove, brooding upon a mountain crest above this scene of peace and beauty.

A STREET IN SALO, ON LAKE GARDA.

DOLCE FAR NIENTE AT GARDONE.

As we sweep inland toward the towns, particularly in the neighborhood of Salo, we see a multitude of latticed windows overgrown with honeysuckle, of pretty loggias redolent of flowers, and reminding us of Venice, together with many leafy nooks and long arcades of grapevines lining the sea wall — all seemingly ideal spots for reverie and artistic inspiration. From time to time musicians come on board, to leave at the next station, their music meanwhile echoing softly from the olive-mantled hills. Musical also are the memories of this shore, for it was near Salo that Gasparo, the first Italian maker of the violin, framed sweet-toned instruments. Musical even are the names of all our halting-places, — Maderno, Toscolano, Gargnano, Bardolino, Barbarano, and Fasano, — all resonant with the many-voweled cadence of the speech of Italy.

Leaving Gardone's curving pageant of sun, shade, and color, our steamer soon glides by the principal island of the lake, —

the Isola di Garda. This to the Gardasee is what the Isola Bella is to Lake Maggiore, and the palatial structure which adorns it seems an exemplification of the well-known passage from the "Lady of Lyons":

> "A palace lifting to eternal heaven
> Its marble walls from out a glossy bower
> Of coolest foliage, musical with birds."

This island, evidently from the earliest times, appealed to the religious instinct which associates ideal beauty with a higher Power. For excavations prove that not alone have splendid palaces and gardens risen, flower-like, from its wave-lapped shore, but that a temple to Olympian Jove once received here men's prayers and praises to the great Creator. But when the inroads of barbarians, more cruel than the winds and waves, had shattered all its buildings with their works of art, the island lay for centuries like a shipwrecked vessel, abandoned either to fishermen or to roving pirates, who divided here their plunder taken from the towns.

AFTER DINNER AT GARGNANO.

At last, religion once more screened it from man's profanation; and in 1220 St. Francis of Assisi built here, on the foundations of a pagan temple, a Christian monastery, which remained intact till 1797, thus giving to the island for five hundred years the title "Isola de' Frati."

In 1875, however, by special permission of the Pope, it passed into private hands, and is now the property of Prince Scipio Borghese. A closer approach reveals the noble architecture of his home. It is a partial reproduction of the Doges' Palace, if not in its entire form, still in the Gothic arches of its tower and porticos, the perforated quatrefoils above its marble columns, and the triangular crenelation of the roof. The gardens, too, though not so rich botanically as those of Isola Bella, are yet delightful with their wealth of flowers and fruit of gold, lining

THE ISOLA DI GARDA.

a labyrinth of shady paths and dainty bridges, interspersed with seats commanding fascinating glimpses of the lake. Can one imagine a more charming summer residence than this? For here one is sufficiently far from the great world to easily forget it, yet near enough to reach it speedily should necessity arise; and meanwhile is completely separated from its noise and dust, and the intrusion of unwelcome visitors, by such a lovely barrier as the rainbow-tinted Gardasee! Cloistered in cool, artistically

THE PALACE, ISOLA DI GARDA.

furnished rooms and corridors, the owner can look out in all directions upon scenes which are among the fairest that this earth can show. Fanned alternately by the midday and the midnight breeze, he can feel here no inconvenience from the heat; and in his sail boat or steam launch he has the privilege of viewing, at any hour, and as often as he wishes, spots which the ordinary traveler beholds, at best, a few times only in his rapid tour. In brief, I do not know a place on earth where one

THE POINT OF SAN VIGILIO.

is likelier to break the tenth commandment than the immediate vicinity of Isola di Garda.

If an admirer of Böcklin's famous picture, "The Island of Death," would see what possibly suggested it to the artist's fancy, let him behold by moonlight the castle-crowned and cypress-shaded promontory of Lake Garda, called the Point of San Vigilio. Even by day, however, this terminus of Monte Baldo, as it makes its final plunge into the lake, is an imposing feature of the eastern shore; and further interest is given to it by the fact that, more than a thousand years ago, its castle was bestowed by Charlemagne on the hermit St. Vigilio, in honor of

SALO, ON LAKE GARDA.

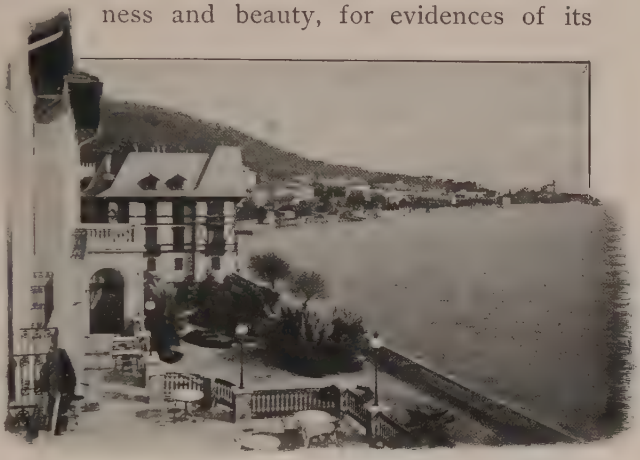
GARDA, ON THE GARDASEE.

whom the cape has ever since been called. Within the pretty bay, protected by this headland, lies Garda, an insignificant village now, but formerly of such importance that it has given to the lake its name. For Charlemagne established here a dukedom, to which for many years the entire region of the Gardasee belonged. But now, except for the imperishable beauty of its situation and the mildness of its winter climate, its glory has departed. Its fate, however, has been less tragic than that of the old city of Benacum, on the other bank, from which the lake's first Roman title was derived; for that was utterly destroyed, in the third century of the Christian era, by a landslip from the neighboring mountain.

But though ill-starred Benacum may have been the first, it certainly was not the only Roman town upon these shores. Scholars have long since ascertained that the whole circuit of

the lake was thickly settled, and that in many instances the citizens of these riparian towns were notable for wealth and culture. Nor should it be forgotten that the commerce of Lake Garda was then far more extensive than it is to-day, since at that time it was connected with the ocean through the channels of the Mincio and Po, and fleets could pass between its waters and the Adriatic. We cannot wonder that for such a prize the conquerors of the world have fought repeatedly. Its history has, in fact, been stormier than its wildest waves.

Mankind seems always to have been attracted to it by its fruitfulness and beauty, for evidences of its primitive settlements go back to prehistoric times. Thus, near Peschiera and Maderno, one may still see relics of the savage lake dwellers, who built far out into the water the rows of piles on which their houses were supported, in the same manner as did their Swiss contemporaries. Yet even these were probably not the earliest to roam along the borders of this lake. Since the first cave-man peered out through the parted forest leaves upon its sailless solitude, who knows how many races may have come and gone, leaving behind them no more traces of their presence here than do the boats that cut their momentary furrows in its waves, the birds that darken its bright surface in their rapid flight, or the fair colors fading from it with the setting sun! Later, the Cim-



FASANO, ON LAKE GARDA.

bri, Rhetii, and other warlike tribes, repeatedly descended from the gloomy forests and inhospitable mountains of the north, and strove to get possession of this inland sea, which of itself could furnish them with sustenance, and which was rimmed with wealthy settlements. The Romans, therefore, were compelled to fight again and again for its retention; and near its southern bank, 268 A.D., the emperor Claudius is said to have defeated two hundred thousand savage warriors, who had swept thus far southward from Tyrōl. During the Middle Ages, also, when separate cities, like Verona, Venice, and Milan, were fighting one another in their bitter rivalry, Lake Garda was the scene of many desperate battles, waged not alone upon its banks by armies, but on its waves by hostile fleets. Still later, in the wars with France, its towns were cruelly ravaged, and its waters stained with blood; while many of the victories of the first Napoleon, in the marvelous campaign of Italy, which marked the opening of his career, were won in its vicinity.

CASTLE TENNO, A MEDIÆVAL STRONGHOLD ON LAKE GARDA.

But the most powerful, as well as the most recent, memories of war connected with the region of the Gardasee are vividly recalled to us by two great towers a few miles from the lake and from each other, and plainly visible to passengers on the steamer an hour or more before they reach the terminus of their southward voyage at Desenzano. They are two national monu-

ments, erected by the French at Solferino and by the Italians at San Martino, these being the respective points on the same battlefield where the united armies of Napoleon III. and Victor Emmanuel gained their crowning victory over Austria, on the 24th of June, 1859. It was a bloody struggle. Brave men on both sides fought with fury all day long beneath a burning sun, the allied forces numbering one hundred and fifty thousand men, the Austrians one hundred and seventy thousand, and when the longed-for darkness came, no less than thirty-seven thousand of these combatants lay stretched in death.

To reach this scene of conflict from Lake Garda is an easy and agreeable undertaking, since one can drive there in an hour from Desenzano, and the excursion in a carriage through the fruitful Lombard country is one that leaves behind it charming recollections. Both of the towers reared upon this sanguinary field are interesting and impressive; but that of San Martino filled me with especial reverence and admiration. The fighting of the French was dictated by the policy of Napoleon, which can be hardly called entirely disinterested when one considers the consequent addition to France of the provinces of Nice and Savoy. It was by his command, rather than by their personal inclination, therefore,

THE TOWER OF SOLFERINO.

that his soldiers fought so bravely here; for otherwise they would have followed peacefully their usual occupations in "La Belle France," and would not have exposed themselves to all this agony and carnage for a cause of which they knew but little, and cared less. But with the Italians it was different; and San Martino's stately shaft commemorates the noblest task that any people can assume — the struggle of an entire nation to achieve its independence.

"HALL OF THE SOVEREIGNS," IN THE TOWER OF SOLFERINO.

How ardently the fires of patriotism glowed in the Italian breasts is shown by an authentic incident recorded of a young Venetian, fatally wounded in this battle. The lad was found among the fallen Austrians, and was at first supposed to be a soldier of Franz Joseph. So, technically, he had been; but he was able to explain to the Italians that his musket never had been loaded, and while his young life ebbed away, the poor boy whispered to the soldier who had shot him that he had been compelled by the Austrian government at Venice to join the kaiser's army, but that he had never fired on his countrymen, preferring to be killed by them. The little hero died an hour later, clasping the hand of one of Garibaldi's men; and on the following day his brothers in the struggle for Italian liberty removed his Austrian uniform, and buried him among the

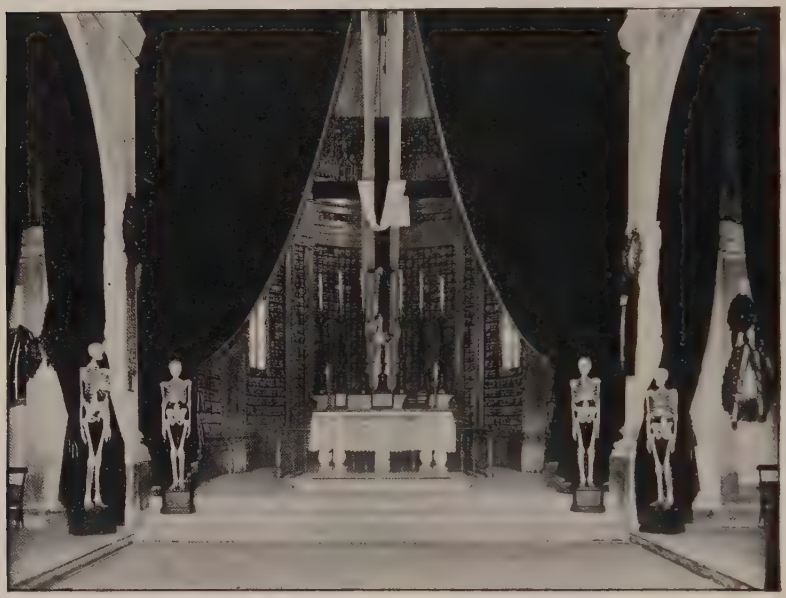
Italian dead. Lovers of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's verse will recollect that she has consecrated to this touching story one of her sweetest poems, entitled "A Forced Recruit at Solferino."

The country which these towers overlook is a well-cultivated plain, resembling a boundless garden, dotted with vineyards, orchards, churches, villages, and villas, which stretch away to the horizon; either toward turreted Verona, whose imposing battlements present so fine a picture of the feudal past; or down the Mincio, toward Mantua, where Virgil lived, and Giulio Romano painted and designed; or northward, toward the glorious Garda-see, whose blue expanse melts gradually into the violet outlines of the Tyrolese Alps.

Alas! that such a marvelous illustration of prolific nature should have been crimsoned, deeply and repeatedly, with human

THE TOWER OF SAN MARTINO.

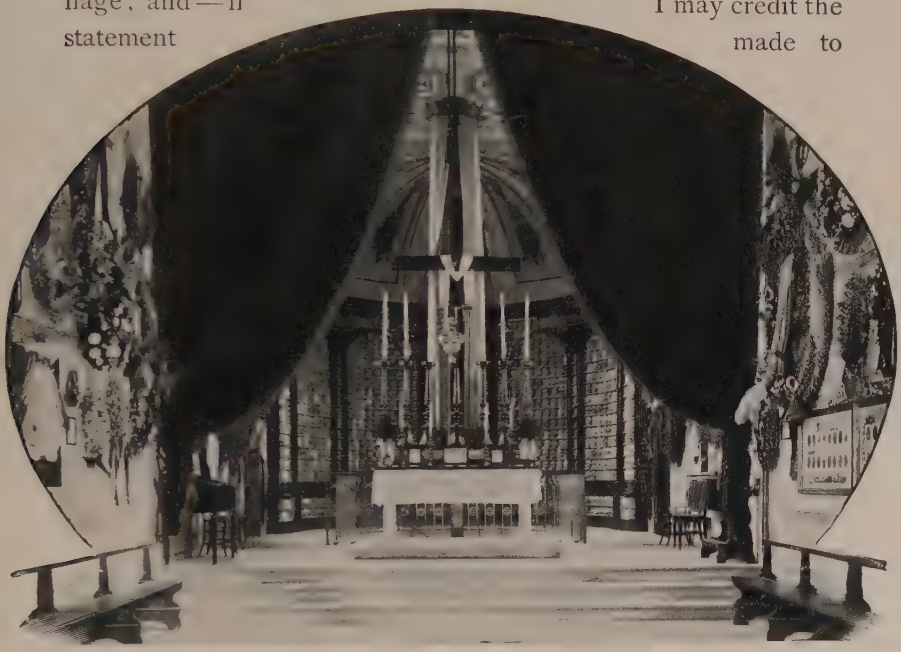
blood. Yet almost in the shadow of these towers stand melancholy proofs of man's mortality. Each of the shafts adjoins an edifice which serves as church and ossuary for the men who here gave up their lives for Italy's redemption. In each case avenues of solemn cypress trees, like battle flags which have been tightly furled, lead up to these memorial chapels, within whose chancel the walls are lined with cases containing rows of skulls, ranged carefully behind glass doors. With questionable taste



OSSUARY OF SOLFERINO, INTERIOR.

the chapel at Solferino is rendered specially grewsome by the presence of four skeletons standing, like ushers to a coming ceremony, on pedestals before the heavy curtains. Most of the skulls are nameless; but here and there I saw one bearing a label, in proof of its identification at the time of its discovery. But those whose skulls are thus presented here are but a fraction of the dead, whose bones are heaped up in the crypts of the two ossuaries. It made me sick at heart to look upon those ghastly

relics of the brave young soldiers — the joy and pride of many loving hearts — who found upon these hills and the surrounding plain the death of heroes. The crypt of San Martino contains the bones of nearly three thousand of these sons of France and Italy; and that of Solferino seven thousand. Yet even this is but a meagre gleaning of the awful harvest reaped upon these fields by death! It was, indeed, a day of horrible carnage; and — if I may credit the statement made to



OSSUARY OF SAN MARTINO, INTERIOR.

me by an officer who participated in the conflict, and to whom subsequently was assigned the task of caring for the dead and the dying — this battle was followed by an amount of physical agony from wounds, thirst, heat, and a lack of suitable care unparalleled in recent times.

It has been usually supposed that the appalling scenes of suffering witnessed by Louis Napoleon here, and at the still more

VICTOR EMMANUEL.

sanguinary battle of Magenta, twenty days before, induced him to conclude the war sooner and much less advantageously than any one in Europe had expected. For although victor in this, — the fourth pitched battle won by the allies with- in eight weeks from the open- ing of the campaign, — Napoleon now amazed the world by offering his adversary terms of peace. But there were other reasons for his conduct besides his naturally tender heart. The four great fortresses of northern Italy known as the "Quadrilateral," which Austria had been building for so many years, and into which the army of Franz Joseph had retired, were still untaken, and it was thought their capture could not be effected at a smaller sacrifice than fifty thousand lives. Moreover, Germany had taken advantage of the situation to mass her troops upon her western frontier, and threatened to attack France in the absence of her

OSSUARY OF SOLFERINO.

FRANZ JOSEPH.

emperor and army, if he went still farther. Hence Louis Napoleon made the peace of Villafranca, which so shocked and disappointed the Italians; for, though it rescued Lombardy from Austrian dominion, it still left Venice to endure for seven years more the fetters of the foreigner, before the double-headed eagle of the Hapsburgs took its departure from the Doges' Palace, never to return; while — since the dream of Italian unity became a reality only by degrees — eleven years had yet to pass ere Victor Emmanuel's army made its entry into Rome, and gave again to Italy the Eternal City.

But interesting and instructive as a visit to this battlefield must always be, if I were asked which feature of my tour on and around Lake Garda gave me the greatest amount of pleasure and inspiration, I should unhesitatingly answer, — the site of the Villa of

OSSUARY OF SAN MARTINO.

Catullus at Sirmione. Sirmione — or, as the Romans called it, Sirmio — is an extremely narrow but beautifully wooded peninsula, which leaves the land abruptly in the very centre of the southern shore, and like a long pier stretches out into the lake for about a mile and a half in the direction of

Meissonier.

BATTLE OF SOLFERINO.

Riva. The form of this tongue of land might be compared to that of a recumbent sea monster, whose raised head, facing northward, rises far above the water, while its long, slender tail sinks gradually until hardly visible above the waves.

LANDING PIER AND HOTEL, SIRMIONE.

As one approaches Sirmione in the steamer, the most conspicuous object in its

THE BAY OF SALO.

THE CASTLE, SIRMIONE.

little town is an enormous castle, dating from the thirteenth century, and built by one of the famous Scaliger family, which for so many years controlled the fortunes of Verona, and whose elaborate tombs still constitute the principal architectural ornaments of that city. This mediæval edifice is at present utilized merely for the government post and telegraph offices, yet its great courtyard well repays a visit, and its gigantic tower commands a view rivaling that of San Martino in extent and beauty.

But neither this nor any other building in the town compares in interest with the ruins of the Roman villa at the northern end of the peninsula. From the small hotel garden, where we had lunched, *al fresco*, in a vine-embowered pavilion rising from the water's edge, an easy walk of fifteen minutes brought us to a stately olive grove, which forms an appropriate antechamber to the classic spot. For the soft shade and venerable air of these old trees attune one's spirit to the influences of the place,

partly because their gnarled and twisted trunks assure us that they, too, have outlived many generations of humanity, partly because these ancient guardians of the poet's home are shrouded with that atmosphere of mystery which characterizes any living object that can number centuries of existence. Moreover, bent and riven by unnumbered tempests, the trees themselves are almost ruins, and their pathetic look of suffering excites our sympathy for what they have endured. The situation of the ancient villa is ideal. Beauty and solitude reign there supreme. No houses occupy the promontory. No rudeness from the natives spoils one's reverie. No beggars clamor for a charity, and no official guardian claims a fee. In fact, no human personality whatever intrudes itself between the traveler and the past of which he dreams. For, marvelous to relate, the whole ex-

THE OLIVE GROVE.

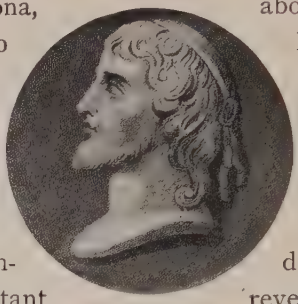
THE RUINED VILLA OF CATULLUS

tremity of the peninsula is kindly left to Nature and the Muses. The structure which once stood here must have been imposing. One wanders through a multitude of lofty arches, which with the lapse of time have come to look like natural bridges, overgrown with vines and lichens. The huge walls, softened and made feminine — but not effeminate — by ivy, wild thyme, scarlet poppies, and innumerable humbler plants, assume new forms at every turn.

One tries in vain to picture what the mansion may have been that rose upon these mighty piers; but we can hardly doubt that it was built in classic style, with porticos adorned with statues repeating in Carrara marble the myths and legends of antiquity; and that these walls, then faced with the same pure material, gleamed far and wide above the lake, as they received the morning and evening greetings of the sun. For its distinguished owner was a man of wealth. His father was the friend and habitual entertainer of Julius Cæsar, in the latter's journeys to and from Cis-Alpine Gaul; and the poet

COURTYARDS TENANTLESS, SAVE FOR ANCIENT OLIVE TREES.

himself possessed, in addition to this charming residence, a fine estate near Tivoli, and had a private yacht sufficiently large for him to make in it a voyage to the Black Sea.



CATULLUS.

Born at Verona, about the year 87 B.C., Catullus seems to have died a little before the assassination of Cæsar, 44 B.C. The references to him by contemporaries show him to have been a man of fine appearance and affectionate disposition; while the one hundred and sixteen of his compositions extant reveal an artist of consummate grace and skill, combined with an intensely passionate nature and profound emotions. Probably many of his works have perished, for other authors mention several, of which no traces now remain; and it is startling to reflect that we should never have read a line of Catullus but for the chance discovery in France, in 1425, of one solitary dilapidated manuscript.

A CORRIDOR OF THE PAST.

On what a slender thread hang sometimes not alone a poet's fame, but also all the happiness and benefit that he is capable of giving to the world! Catullus' enthusiastic poem on his home-coming to Sirmio is probably as joyous an expression of delight as any spot on earth has ever inspired. When he

composed it, he had just returned from Bithynia in Asia Minor, whither he had gone on a political mission which seems to have proved disappointing. How overjoyed he was to see again his own delightful ("venusta") Sirmio, is evident from the lines:

"Sweet Sirmio! thou, the very eye
Of all peninsulas and isles,
That in our lakes of silver lie,
Or sleep, enwreathed by Neptune's smiles, —

How gladly back to thee I fly!
Still doubting, asking — *can* it be
That I have left Bithynia's sky,
And gaze in safety upon thee?

Oh! what is happier than to find
Our hearts at ease, our perils past;
When, anxious long, the lightened mind
Lays down its load of care at last;

When tired with toil o'er land and deep,
Again we tread the welcome floor
Of our own home, and sink to sleep
On the long-wished-for bed once more.

This, this it is, that pays alone
The ills of all life's former track;
Shine out, my beautiful, my own!
Sweet Sirmio, greet thy master back!

And thou, fair Lake, whose water quaffs
The light of heaven, like Lydia's sea,
Rejoice, rejoice, — let all that laughs
Abroad, at home, laugh out for me!"

Equally beautiful, but in a very different key, is the pathetic elegy written by Catullus on the death of his brother, whom he evidently dearly loved. No metrical translation does justice to the simple pathos of the original; but the despairing cry of the Roman bard — "All hail, my brother, and farewell!" — is well known to us all.

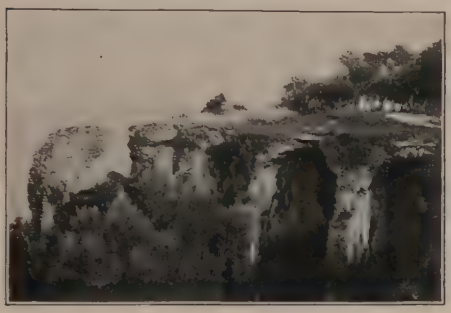
Most of the leading literary lights of Rome, including Virgil,

Ovid, Horace, and Tibullus, were the successors of Catullus in the art of poetry, and honored him with the title of "Doctus" in alluding to him, thus testifying to his talent and his erudition. Some of them also made pilgrimages here, as many famous personages of the modern world have done, to render homage to the poet's memory. Thus, Bonaparte, in 1797, when on his way to sign the treaty of Campio Formio, — though proud and eager to conclude the terms which were to cover him with glory, insure to France the coveted frontier of the Rhine, and leave her virtually supreme in Italy, — yet halted long enough to turn aside from the direct route east of Desenzano, that he might offer here his tribute to a bard whose lyrics had outlived the wars of eighteen centuries. Tennyson's visit to the place we can more easily understand, not only from the natural affinity uniting two poetic souls, but also from the fact that in Catullus' lament for his dead brother the author of "In Memoriam" found a bond of sympathy transcending all the intervening years. Amid these ruins, therefore, one recalls with double pleasure the verses of the English poet:

TENNYSON.

"Row us out from Desenzano, to your Sirmione row!
So they rowed, and there we landed — 'O venusta Sirmio'!
There to me through all the groves of olive in the summer glow,
There beneath the Roman ruin where the purple flowers grow,
Came that 'Ave atque Vale' of the Poet's hopeless woe, —
Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen hundred years ago."

The outer world has made what men call progress since Catullus was inspired by this view; but on the peninsula itself there has been retrogression. Nature in lake and mountain is as lovely now as then; but ruin sits upon the olive-mantled cliffs, and in their rear the little town is principally dependent upon foreign visitors, and on a health establishment of sulphur baths, whose water bubbles up within the lake, close by the shore, and is conveyed in pipes to the sanatorium. Nevertheless, in presence of a scene of such transcendent beauty and poetic charm, one is transported not alone from local poverty and squalor, but also from all recollection of to-day's mad money-getting and commercialism, to the repose, nobility, and poetry of the past — that peaceful, art-creating past — of what was best in Greece and Rome.



THE "PROW" OF THE PROMONTORY.

Absorbed in such reflections, Sirmio's promontory seemed to me the prow of a mysterious vessel, cleaving the water noiselessly and imperceptibly, and bearing me to an ideal world. Some sixty feet below the wall on which I sat, the sandstone reefs lay glistening like scales of gold, lapped by the beryl-colored waves, whose soft, caressing

FAREWELL TO SIRMIONE.

murmur mingled with the whisper of the olives in the light June breeze. The afternoon was waning. Far out toward San Vigilio, Lake Garda looked like a vast shield of opals, its wondrous colors changing like the hues of a chameleon, as the fleecy squadrons of the sky sailed far above its surface. A tender bloom of violet rested on the Tyrolese mountains, as if they had been touched and tinted by a sunset cloud. Through one of the ivied arches of the poet's home I saw beneath me, floating like a seagull in the shadow of the cliff, the little boat that was to bear me hence to take the steamer at another point. Yet still I lingered on and on, dreading to close this volume of poetic paganism, of which an exquisitely illustrated page lay open here before me. Even when finally I had departed, and in the sunset light was sailing toward the eastern shore, the charm of Sirmio seemed as potent as before. For as I looked back from the shelter of the slanting sail, and watched that happy day's last footstep on the purpling clouds, an iridescent veil of pearly mist rose slowly from the lake and wrapped the classic ruins in its radiant folds, as if the spirit of Euterpe hovered o'er the spot where one of her most gifted votaries had lived and died.

THE WAITING BOAT.

THE DOLOMITES

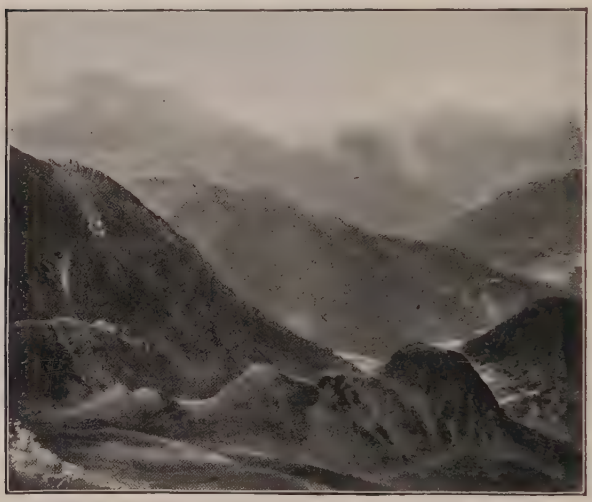
THE VILLAGE OF SEIS, AND MT. SCHLERN.

"Every year I devote myself to new researches; and, in acquiring a kind of enjoyment little known by the rest of mankind, — that of visiting Nature in some of her loftiest sanctuaries, — I ask of her an initiation into some of her mysteries, believing that she admits to them only those who sacrifice everything for her, and who render her continual homage." — DOLOMIEU.

THE name of the French geologist who wrote these words has been bestowed not only on the mineral, Dolomite, which he first analyzed and described, but also on the wonderful mountains which are largely formed of that material, and are called the Dolomites.

A GROUP OF DOLOMITE PEAKS.

Hence, since the history of the man is almost as extraordinary as the peaks named after him, it is both natural and appropriate to let our thoughts revert to him for a moment at the start, lest we should otherwise entirely forget the student in the scenery. Few lives are so romantic and adventurous as that of Dolomieu. Having become in early life a member of the Order of the Knights of Malta, when still in his nineteenth year he killed in a duel a fellow-knight, and in accordance with the laws of the fraternity was condemned to death. Pardoned, however, by the grand master, in consideration of his youth, he was set at liberty after nine months' imprisonment. Devoting himself thenceforth to scientific studies, he soon became a corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences at Paris, and traveled extensively in Switzerland, Spain, Sicily, and Italy. In 1797, selected by Napoleon to be one of the scientific staff, which was to accompany him to the Orient, he went with Bonaparte to Egypt. Compelled, however, to return on account of ill health, he had the misfortune to be taken captive on his way home by the Neapolitan government; and as the king of Naples hated him personally for having, in 1783, revealed to the grand master of his order the sinister designs of Naples



THE LAND OF THE DOLOMITES.

against Malta, the scientist was thrown at once into a filthy dungeon at Messina, where, clothed in rags, with only a little straw for a bed, and barely kept alive by wretched food, he languished in captivity for twenty-one months. Yet, though deprived of writing materials, Dolomieu used a pointed bit of wood for a pen, and the soot of his lamp for ink, and under these distressing circumstances wrote upon the margins of the leaves of a Bible — the only book allowed him — his Treatise on Mineralogy and his Memoir on Minerals. So great was the hostility of his royal captor that on the conclusion of peace between France and Naples a special clause had to be inserted in the treaty for his rescue. Unhappily this came too late for the brilliant career which otherwise would certainly have awaited him; for, though he was at once appointed Professor of Mineralogy in the Museum of Natural History at Paris, the hardships he had undergone had so affected his constitution that he died seven months after his release.

Such, then, being the history of the man from whom the

A LOVELY POINT AMONG THE DOLOMITES: SAN MARTINO DI CASTROZZA.

Dolomites are called, let us recall, if we have forgotten it, the special part of Europe which they occupy. It is, *par excellence*, the southeast section of Tyrōl, east of the Brenner railway, and not many miles to the northwest of Venice. In fact, a splendid carriage road, known as the Strada Regia, each yard of which is as well made and smooth as any avenue in Central Park, passes directly through these mountains, almost north and south, for a distance of sixty-four miles, from Toblach in the Austrian Puster Thal, to beautiful Belluno in the north of Italy; and since the latter city is but seventy-two miles by rail from Venice, there are few more delightful journeys in the world than that to be enjoyed, in the right season of the year, upon this noble thoroughfare, one end of which is in the heart of Europe, while the other terminus might well be called an antechamber to the court of the Adriatic Queen. Two other doorways to the Dolomites there are of which I shall speak later in connection with a journey made through them; but that of Toblach is the one which I first entered; and, as the best known and the most frequented of them all, it is to this that we first naturally turn.

ON THE WAY TO THE "DREI ZINNEN," NEAR THE AMPEZZO VALLEY.

But where is Toblach? some may ask. For though American tourists, as a rule, know every nook of Switzerland, and even many parts of the Tyrōl, still Toblach and the Dolomites have thus far been explored by few of them, and hence the situation of the town may not be clear without a word of explanation. About midway between the city of Botzen and the summit of the Brenner Pass, the wild and narrow cañon of the Eisack meets a broader valley coming to it from the east, their point of union being known as Franzensfeste. This junction of two valleys and two

A BIT OF THE "STRADA REGIA" NEAR LANDRO.

FRANZENSFESTE.

streams is guarded, as its name denotes, by two prodigious fortresses, whose scores of grated openings, masking carefully trained guns, command the approach from Italy for a great distance, and would apparently make the passage of a hostile force impossible. The valley stretching like a right arm from the Brenner is the Puster Thal, and has for centuries been the great Tyrolean highway toward Vienna. Extending, as it does, almost directly east and west, the morning and evening lights are specially favorable for its embellishment; and one or two afternoon journeys through its charmingly romantic scenery, made glorious by the eastward-streaming beams of waning day, form some of my most precious memories of Tyrolese travel; so wonderfully does the evening glow enhance the beauty of its numerous castles, picturesque hamlets, and occasional snow-capped mountains, visible at the ends of tempting lateral ravines, a river meantime winding round the railway like an undulating avenue of polished jade. South of this stately valley stand the famous Dolomites, whose ghostly fingers, sparkling with glacier jewels, rise now and then above the lesser mountains in the foreground, beckon mysteriously to us for a moment, and then disappear. These brief and tantalizing visions of their summits only whet

NIEDERDORF IN THE PUSTER THAL.

our curiosity and eagerness to explore them; and hence it is with mingled pleasure and excitement that we leave the train, about two hours from Franzensfeste, and find ourselves in Toblach, — the gateway to the world-renowned Ampezzo Thal. Here railway travel ends for those who would explore the Dolomites; for these exclusive peaks have not as yet allowed the railroad to come nearer to them than their portals. The favorite deity of the present generation, Speed, has not a single shrine within the solemn circle outlined by their flaming walls; and through the noble corridors of their inner fastnesses the tourist must either drive or walk.

A LATERAL VALLEY OPENING FROM THE PUSTER THAL.

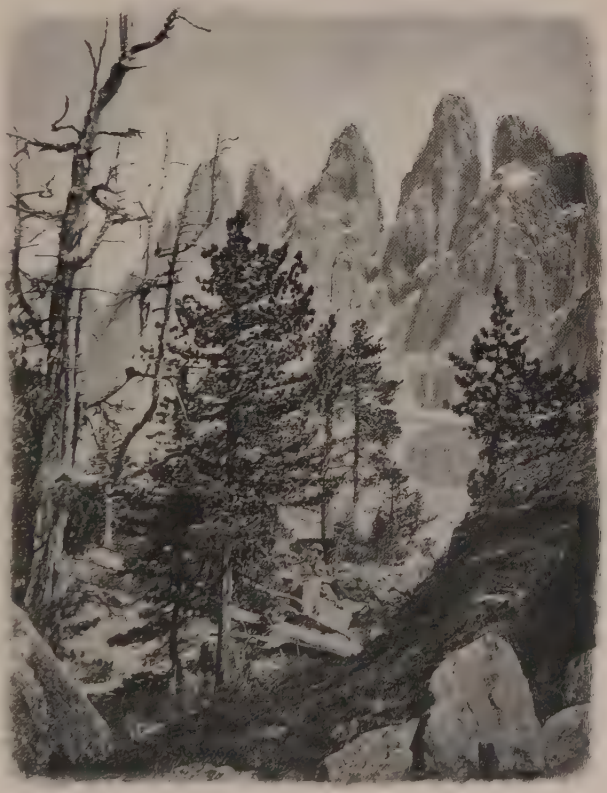
It is a delightful experience to sit in a comfortable, two-horse victoria at the door of the Hotel Toblach, while the driver gathers up the reins preparatory to starting either for Cortina or for the charming intermediate halting-places — Schluderbach and Landro. One knows that he is on the

TOBLACH, LOOKING TOWARD THE AMPEZZO THAL.

threshold of a realm of mystery as well as beauty, which, notwithstanding all that he has seen, will, he is sure, surprise as much as it will fascinate him. In entering thus the country of the Dolomites, I felt as if I had taken my seat in a theatre to behold a play, of which I had already heard so much that I was now impatient to observe and judge of it for myself. Hence, as our carriage left the hotel grounds and swung directly southward into the Ampezzo road, I had the same sensation that comes to me at the opening of an opera, when the first notes of the orchestra are sounding, and the drop curtain begins to rise. In this case, the first vista of the Dolomitic stage revealed the entrance to the Ampezzo valley — a narrow doorway framed by two gigantic mountains. Between these, in the distance, like a glittering magnet drawing us irresistibly to the region which it well exemplifies, towered the splendid mass of Monte Cristallo, its corrugated sides and turrets glistening, here with brilliant colors, there with ice and snow. A pretty lakelet, called the Dürren See, repeated in its depths these glories of the upper world, as if to make sure that no traveler should miss them: —much as the mirror in the Roman Rospigliosi Palace is placed upon a table under Guido's famous ceiling painting of Aurora, so that those whose necks are wearied with the effort of surveying something far above them may study at their ease its replica below.

MONTE CRISTALLO AND THE DÜRREN SEE.

One feature of the country instantly impressed me — the wonderful clearness of its atmosphere. Huge domes and spires, really miles away, seemed close at hand; and like the desert air in purity was the breeze which now and then swept downward from them to refresh us as we drove along. Another noticeable trait was a remarkable likeness in these barren crags and variegated hues to the fantastically shaped and richly tinted peaks that rise in arid splendor from the Arizona Cañon. But while in the latter case the agent which thus fashioned them was water, working through an inconceivably lengthened period of erosion, the sculptors of the Dolomites, as we now see them, have been wind, rain, frost, and snow. In fact, the quality of these mountains that impressed itself most strongly on our minds (as well as on our moods, so strangely did this scenery affect us) was their astonishing configuration. The wildest imagination could not possibly conceive a more bewildering array of architectural designs than have been here thrown up against the sky. The Dolomites are the Alps in ruins. The elements,



DOLOMITE "OBELISKS."

allied for their destruction, first cleft, then grooved the monster masses, till they stood asunder like extended fingers; and ever since then they have either blown or washed away innumerable tons of yielding rock, till now the mutilated ridges rear — a mile or two above our heads — millions of splintered cliffs and sharp, serrated walls which we in childish helplessness compare to castles, citadels, cathedrals, obelisks, towers, pyramids, chimneys, needles, bayonets, tusks, and other grotesque and distorted shapes, to name which all the languages devised by man are insufficient. Save in a few rare combinations, their *forms* cannot be truthfully called beautiful; but their effects of color, which will be considered later, are unique and exquisite.

A DOLOMITE "TUSK."

To me the Dolomites, with all their grandeur, are as a rule fierce, cruel, desolate, and uncanny. They are such peaks as Doré might have seen in nightmare when engaged in illustrating Don Quixote. Hence, much as I enjoy repeated visits to their neighbor-

hood, I would not care to *live* among them, as, for example, I delight in dwelling near the mountains of Meran, or in the valleys of the Bernese Oberland. For, unlike these, there is nothing peaceful in the aspect of the Dolomites, such as we find in the colossal snow dome of Mont Blanc, and in the spotless summit of the Jungfrau. They never seem to *rest* against the sky, and much less to support it like gigantic caryatides, but rather look as if they were encroaching on the azure like an enemy, and with their monstrous teeth and claws appear to bite and rend it. Nor are these Dolomitic forms so permanent as to suggest the "eternal hills." They are forever in a state of change. They will not look, nor can they be, next year, exactly as they are to-day. Their transformations illustrate the words of Tennyson:

> "The hills are shadows, and they flow
> From form to form, and nothing stands;
> They melt like mist, the solid lands,
> Like clouds they shape themselves and go."

CRUMBLING TOWERS.

AN ISLAND OF THE UPPER AIR.

Accordingly, whether we gaze upon them from our hotel windows, or look up at them in amazement as we drive along their bases, or climb to altitudes where we can study their peculiarities more closely, the questions constantly recur to us, What can have been the history of these colossal ridges, and what has caused, and is still causing, their unusual disintegration?

That they are fossiliferous, and not igneous, in their origin is certain, their composition being principally "dolomite," that is to say, a combination of carbonate of limestone and carbonate of magnesia resembling chalk, yet somewhat heavier and harder. It is preëminently a stone that lends itself to the caprices of the atmosphere, and hence in time assumes those numberless Protean shapes which so astonish the beholder. As to the origin of the Dolomites, the theory now most generally accepted is that they are coral reefs, once covered by the waves, and slowly lifted by a crumpling of the earth's crust, not merely to their present height, but even higher, since so much of their old material has been loosened by the elements and carried down again by rain and river to the sea.

When we confront such awful monsters of the stony world, repeatedly attaining heights of more than ten thousand feet, it seems at first incredible that they should ever have

A FAMOUS DOLOMITE PEAK, "SASSO MAGGIORE"—9,240 FEET.

been submerged reefs, built up by countless billions of small insects, whose microscopic skeletons still persist in the stupendous cliffs, although long since chemically transformed into an indistinguishable mass. Yet we all know that in the southern oceans similar reefs exist, upon which thousands of human beings live to-day, and on whose jagged crags, composed almost exclusively of fossils, many a mighty ship and gallant crew have dashed themselves to death. Nor does the theory that the Dolomites were once submerged seem so untenable when we remember that the whole of Switzerland, save possibly a few of its highest summits, was, till comparatively recent geologic times, completely covered by the sea. For it should never be forgotten what a rôle the ocean floor has played by its repeated elevations and subsidences in the slow metamorphosis, which in the course of possibly one hundred million years has changed our earth from a convulsive mass of cooling fire to the compara-

FANTASTIC FRAGMENTS.

A STORM-BEATEN REEF.

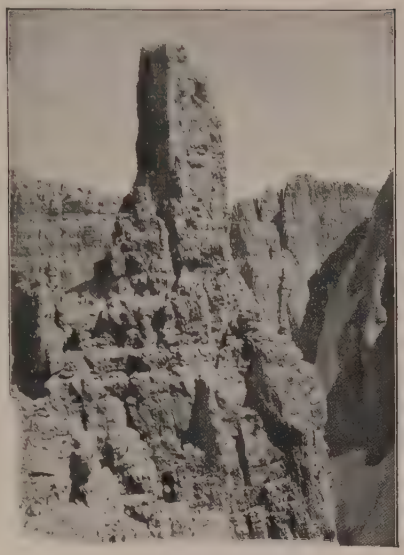
tively tranquil globe on whose still thin, and in some places still precarious, crust we walk to-day:

> "Oh earth, what changes hast thou seen!
> There, where the long street roars, hath been
> The stillness of the central sea."

It is indeed a wonderful panorama of past ages that unrolls itself before us, as we thoughtfully survey these Dolomites. As in a vision, we behold our earth in the Triassic period of its evolution. A moderately heated and comparatively shallow ocean covers much of Europe's area, and on its vast floor layer after layer of sediment is being deposited. Gradually, in suitable places and under favorable conditions, coral reefs are formed, which, with an increase of marine life, spread extensively. Lower and lower sinks the ocean floor, as the hot, central mass continues to contract; but with its gradual subsidence the upward-growing coral reefs keep pace, and still maintain their relative position near the surface, for their industrious builders cannot live below a depth of twenty fathoms. It is for them a struggle for existence. At times terrific outbursts from earth's fiery heart disturb this reef-building, and mighty masses of volcanic

THE "FIVE FINGER POINTS."

porphyry are thrown out, cleaving and separating what has thus been formed. But, on the whole, the work progresses, until in consequence of the cooling of the water the coral insects die. For, just as they cannot exist too far beneath the surface, so they cannot survive a temperature that falls below sixty-six degrees, and therefore at the present time are limited to a zone extending north and south of the equator about eighteen hundred miles.



A CATHEDRAL TOWER.

Then came a gradual elevation of the ocean bed, whereby these coral reefs of South Tyrōl were lifted slowly far above the waves. Such changes are incomprehensible, so long as we con-

IN THE HEART OF THE DOLOMITES.

sider them merely from our physical standpoint; for, measured by our puny frames, the lofty mountain ranges of our globe appear to us as huge as trees and houses must appear to ants. To understand their relative proportions, therefore, we must mentally place ourselves at a distance from our planet, and then remember that even the magnificent Himalayas, although six miles high, are, in comparison with the earth's diameter of eight thousand miles, no larger than the netting on the surface of a cantaloupe. Yet these, like the Dolomites, were once much larger than they are to-day; for indefatigable atmospheric agents have been ever since at work denuding and decreasing them.

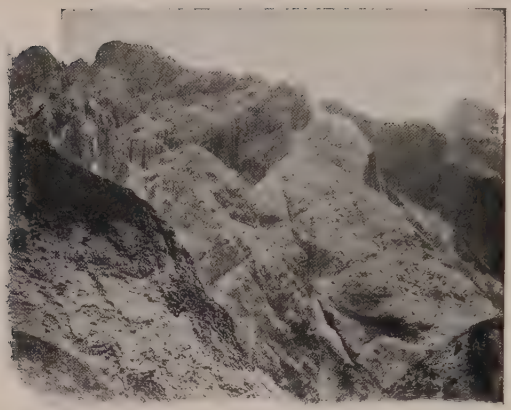
It is a most impressive fact in the strange history of our cooling orb, that, just as soon as land has ever risen from the shelter of the ocean, the forces of the air have grappled with it as an enemy; and aided by the waves, which are forever gnawing at its shores, these elements combine in a persistent effort to wear down the continents to a common level under the surface of the sea. The very first shower that fell upon the newly elevated crests began the work of denudation by forming countless rivulets, whose channels were determined by the inequalities already existing in the shape or hardness of the stone. These, lower down, becoming swollen and united streams, plowed out deep valleys, through which fragments of the storm-swept cliffs were brought, either in

WORN BY ELEMENTAL STRIFE.

minute particles by the rushing water, or in vast masses pried off by the frost, and pulled down by the force of gravitation in the form of boulders, avalanches, or tremendous landslips.

Of all the mountains on our globe the Dolomites have probably suffered most from these attacks; but even the most enduring peaks have been thus greatly worn away. Each has its grinding glacier, wearing torrent, or at least its frequent avalanche of rocks; and sober scientists assure us that the amount of substance which the Alps have lost is almost as enormous as what now remains. For the great gravel beds of Switzerland, and much of the present soil of Italy, Germany, Belgium, France, and Holland, are made up of materials washed down from those Alpine summits in the course of ages, and spread out on the lowlands by the Rhine, Rhone, Inn, and other streams. Nor is this leveling process at an end. So active, for example, is the Rhone in making new land on the coast of France, that Arles is said to be nearly twice as far from the Mediterranean as it was in the period of the Romans. What the Adige and Po are doing on the eastern shore of

DISINTEGRATING PEAKS, OR "EARTH PYRAMIDS."



AN UPLAND WILDERNESS.

Italy is evident from the fact that the old city of Ravenna, once a famous seaport, is separated now from the water by a stretch of sand and forest four miles wide; while Adria, the harbor of antiquity which gave its name to the Adriatic, lies now some sixteen miles away from its blue waves. Strange thought! that there will come a time when even the loftiest and hardest mountains that now pierce the empyrean shall have shrunk to molehills, covered by the sea. Ten million years may be required to accomplish this; but what is that in Nature's calendar? Humanity will not live long enough to see that

CORTINA, WITH MT. TOFANA.

deluge of the continents; but some life even then may linger on our aged planet, and possibly amid a voiceless solitude the future monsters of the deep will watch the ultimate submergence of the last low remnant of the home of man.

All these reflections did not come to me on the drive from Toblach to Cortina; but, starting then, they gradually impressed themselves upon my mind during my sojourn in that pretty village and during several excursions made in its vicinity. Cortina itself is one of the most popular places of resort in the Dolomites, and sixteen thousand tourists, on an average, come there annually. For, with an altitude of about four thousand feet above the sea, its summer climate is delightful; a crisp, dry air atoning for its lack of shade.

THE CAMPANILE AT CORTINA.

It is not often that one finds in a small mountain town of a thousand inhabitants anything architecturally worth examining. But every visitor to Cortina looks with admiration at the stately campanile of its parish church, which has a height of two hundred and fifty-six feet, and is constructed out of massive and, in portions of its surface, elegantly sculptured stone. The hotel Aquila Nera, also, is exceedingly attractive from the artistic frescos painted on its walls by the proprietor's brothers. These mural paintings are designed to symbolize the progress

of a human life from happy childhood, with its sport of coasting on the snow, through the successive phases of young love and toilsome manhood, to the last sad picture of old age. Here also are some pretty allegorical scenes and portraits of a number of the great Italian masters, — Da Vinci, Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Titian.

Such tasteful decoration in a mountain village seems amazing, until we see how thoroughly artistic and ingenious the people of Cortina are. Here, for example, are two government industrial schools, where boys and girls are taught either a beautiful mosaic work in metal and in wood, or else a silver filigree work, for both of which the place is famous. Boys are admitted to these schools at the age of thirteen, and a four years' course is necessary to secure a graduate's diploma. The permanent exhibition of the articles made by the young scholars or by former pupils is a fascinating place to visit; and very self-denying must the tourist be who can resist an almost overpowering desire to purchase recklessly the lovely inlaid boxes, tables, cabinets, canes, and scores of other tempting objects here displayed. The industry of inlaid metal work was introduced here by an Englishman who had been familiar with it in India; and it has been so cordially adopted and so faithfully perfected by these peasants that now considerably more than twenty thou-

FRESCOES ON THE HOTEL AQUILA NERA, CORTINA.

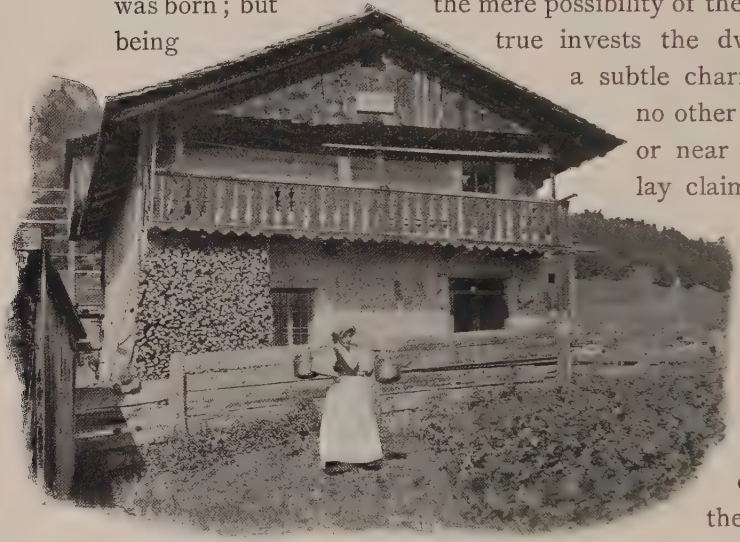
sand dollars' worth of it is sold annually, together with about five thousand dollars' worth of silver filigree. Moreover, as we shall presently discover, the inhabitants of the neighboring Grödner Thal are fully as artistic in their wood-carving as are the people of the Ampezzo Thal in their specialties. Hence in the region of the Dolomites we have the pleasure of finding

HOTEL BELLEVUE, CORTINA, WITH MT. POMAGAGNON.

worthy of our admiration not alone the scenery of the mountains, but also the brave, clever people who dwell among them.

We ought not to be surprised, however, to find facility and taste in art among these villagers; for it will ever be the crowning glory of this region that it produced one of the foremost painters that the world has ever seen, and certainly its greatest master in the art of coloring, — Titian. That this immortal artist was a native of the Dolomite country has been always known, and until recently the belief has been unquestioned that he first saw the light in the town of Pieve di Cadore, twenty miles distant from Cortina. Within the last few years, however, a German

archæologist claims to have discovered documentary proof that, although Titian certainly spent his early childhood at Pieve, his actual birthplace was a humble cottage in the little hamlet known as Campo di Sotto, reached from Cortina by an easy walk of half an hour. Nothing particular distinguishes this reputed birthplace of the master from other peasant houses near it, save a memorial tablet on the outer wall, containing the announcement that there, "according to the tradition of the country," Titian was born; but the mere possibility of the statement's being true invests the dwelling with a subtle charm, to which no other structure in or near Cortina can lay claim. It is at all events a pleasing thought that his young eyes may first have wandered over the cyclorama of resplendent battlements encircling this little village, and that his first acquaintance with the world of colors may have been made here, either through the almost supernatural pageant of the sunset glow upon the Dolomites, or through the countless blossoms which tint the surrounding fields so richly, that one is tempted to believe the pretty legend that Titian, as a child, used no prosaic chalk or charcoal for his sketches, but formed his colors from the juice of flowers.



TITIAN'S TRADITIONAL BIRTHPLACE, NEAR CORTINA.

Certain it is that in the month of June I found the meadows which environ Campo di Sotto more gorgeous in their hues than

even Monte Cristallo or the Croda Rossa. To the majority of Americans I think the flowers of these Alpine pastures would be a revelation, not only in their great profusion, but in their wonderful variety. Among them, for example, near this "birthplace of Titian," I noticed that the yellow pansies, which were cultivated as rare favorites in old-fashioned gardens round my childhood's home, were here spread through the fields so lavishly that they imparted to the rainbow masses of the higher

MOUNTAIN FLOWERS.

flowers and the ripening grain an undertone of gold, as poppies light with scarlet flame the wheat-fields of the Isle of Wight. Fluttering over these meadows, too, and dancing gaily round our path were hundreds of blue butterflies, so tiny and ethereal that one might fancy them the souls of the blue harebells and forget-me-nots, on which they sometimes paused to rest. Just how such myriads of blossoms affect the quality of hay, only a scientific farmer could explain; but one would like to

THE ITALIAN FRONTIER, AMPEZZO THAL.

think that the sleek, well-kept cows that browse among them are better for a diet flavored with forget-me-nots and pansies, whose colors are to the passing pilgrim's eyes a joy and a refreshment. Let us hope, too, that their sweet presence here makes labor lighter for the patient men and women who often bear the harvest of these meadows on their shoulders up long and wearisome ascents to widely scattered barns.

Even though all historians should decide that Titian was a native, not, as had been supposed, of Pieve di Cadore, but of this little hamlet near Cortina, a journey to the former place would still be well worth making if only for the reason that the excursion itself is full of interest and beauty. The smooth and admirably graded road on which we drive thither is the already mentioned international highway to Belluno; and the grand scenery which it affords is a continual source of joy and inspiration. Moreover, the history of this portion of the Dolomite country is exceed-

ON THE ROAD TO PIEVE.

THE VILLAGE OF SEIS, AND MT. SCHLERN.

ingly attractive; for only three and a half miles south of Cortina we cross the frontier into Italy and enter that historic borderland known as Cadore, which has so often been the scene of desperate fighting between Austrians and Italians.

The city of Pieve is rarely spoken of alone, but usually has the affix, "di Cadore," to distinguish it from other towns of the same name in different parts of Italy; and Titian also, when not alluded to as "Il Divino," was commonly called "Titian da Cadore," as indicating that he was a native of that country. What, therefore, is or was Cadore? To one who has never investigated the subject, the answer to this question comes as a complete surprise. Few sections of our earth, of equal size and similar remoteness from the outer world, possess so many golden threads of precious memories and traditions woven with an heroic past. During the first millennium of the Christian era, it is true, its

A SCENE IN OLD CADORE.

history does not differ greatly from that of other portions of the Alpine region separating Germany and Italy. That is to say, the conquering Romans naturally pushed their legions northward through its valleys, and subsequently, when the lifeblood of the dying empire left its pinched extremities and ebbed back feebly to its failing heart, there surged through these ravines and passes billow after billow of barbarian invasion, as the unlettered hordes of Goths, Huns, Ostrogoths, and Franks broke through the barriers of Cisalpine Gaul and thundered at the gates of Rome.

A WAYSIDE FARM, WITH FRAME FOR DRYING BEANS.

At last, however, about the year 1000 A.D., the inhabitants of Cadore formed themselves into a republic, which gradually shaped itself into an admirable government, consisting of ten provinces, each of which sent three deputies to a parliament whose meeting-place was the capital, Pieve. Marvelous to relate, this sturdy little republic, founded five hundred years before America was discovered, and nearly eight hundred years before the birth of the United States, existed for about eight centuries, expiring only in 1797, when Bonaparte changed this portion of the map of Europe by the peace of Campio Formio.

During the last four centuries of its history the government of Cadore maintained a close alliance with the Republic of Venice, caused not by conquest on the part of the Venetians, but by a mutual agreement, following on a free vote of the people of Cadore. That was indeed a time when friendship with the Lion of St. Mark was well worth striving for. It was the golden age of Venice, when

> "Her daughters had their dowers
> From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East
> Poured in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
> In purple was she robed, and of her feast
> Monarchs partook, and deemed their dignity increased."

Yet, on the other hand, so much did the Venetian government prize the fidelity and honesty of its allies in the Dolomites that it conferred on them the rights and privileges of Venetian citizenship. Hence, Titian, though Cadorian by birth, was also a Venetian. The archives of the past recount a number of favors given and received by one republic or the other. Thus the Cadorians, in 1578, contributed one hundred larch trees toward the restoration of the Doges' Palace, which had been destroyed by fire; and again, in 1645, these mountaineers sent as a present to the arsenal of Venice two hundred and twenty larches and two hundred pines, specially chosen for their size and beauty, to be used in shipbuilding.

A FOREST IN CADORE.

This leads me parenthetically to pay a word

of tribute to the splendid forests of the Dolomites. Two thousand years ago they furnished planks for Roman galleys, and their grand, stately trunks have been for many centuries cut and floated down the rivers to all parts of Italy. Out of the finest of these noble trees were built the great Venetian fleets, whose sailors conquered Constantinople, Crete, and the Dalmatian coast, and won the glorious victory over the Turks at Lepanto. At that time Venice had the most extensive dockyard in the world, and kept in it some sixteen thousand artisans constantly employed in working up material furnished by Cadore. The forests of the Dolomites, therefore, aided not a little in making the Republic of the Wingèd Lion mistress of the seas. Nor was this all; for thousands of pines and larches, which had reached enormous stature in the shadow of these mountains, were likewise sent down to the Queen of the Adriatic, to serve her, not as war ships on the open sea, but in the humbler capacity of standing steadfastly within the mud of her lagoons. There patiently and ingloriously, yet no less effectively, they have for centuries been the pedestals on which have rested the magnificent bridges, palaces, and churches, which lift their mediæval marbles in the jeweled

DESTINED TO SERVE AS MASTS.

City of the Sea, and even in their faded splendor fascinate the world.

If, therefore, Venice may be said to have upheld the Republic of Cadore, Cadore may be said with equal truth to have supported Venice. In many ways the two republics helped each other in arms as well as in the arts. For, like the pines that wrestle on the mountains of Cadore with the winter storms, the people of the Dolomites were forced to fight repeatedly for their independence, and many are the national and individual deeds of valor which adorn their annals. One of the victories gained in 1508 by the Venetians and Cadorians over the Germans occurred when Titian was thirty-two years old, and he immortalized it by his famous painting called "The Battle of Cadore," which was unfortunately burned in the fire that destroyed the Doges' Palace

A MOUNTAIN FARM, AMPEZZO THAL, WITH MT. POMAGAGNON.

MT. MARMOLADA, THE HIGHEST OF THE DOLOMITES — 11,020 FEET.

in 1577. The loss was irreparable; for though the palace soon rose from its ashes in fresh glory, the art of Titian was no longer available, since he had died the year before. Accordingly, Francesco da Ponte was selected to replace the work of the master with a painting on the same subject; and this it is which now adorns, with the old title, the Hall of the Greater Council in the Ducal Palace.

With such a past behind them, it is not strange that many of the towns and villages between Cortina and Belluno still have

A WAYSIDE INN AMONG THE DOLOMITES.

interesting relics of the days of the republic and numerous trophies of the victories of fathers, sons, and brothers in the fierce wars of 1848, 1859, and 1866, when, in successive stages toward their goal, so many brave Cadorians sacrificed their lives for a united Italy. On some of the houses may be seen the family coats of arms carved in the great stone lintels of the doors; and many a substantial mansion has for its inmates the descendants of once famous statesmen, judges, lawyers, priests, or soldiers of the olden time, whose portraits hang upon the walls. These dwellings, too, though unpretentious, are often rich in antique furniture, paintings, books, and manuscripts, a few of which are sold occasionally under stress of poverty, but most of which are treasured by their owners. Some of these old Cadorian families can produce with pride from ancient chests or quaintly sculptured cupboards deeds, wills, and other documents, written on vellum, and bearing not infrequently the signatures of popes and doges — sometimes even that of an emperor.

A STUDY FOR A PAINTER.

In one of these villages, while we were waiting for our horses

PIEVE DI CADORE.

to be watered and to be fed, as usual, with black bread, the innkeeper, who was cutting up the loaves, surprised me by addressing us in English; and when I asked him where he had learned the language, I was still more astonished to have him answer, "In Raritan, New Jersey." Of course I was well aware that thousands of Italians migrated yearly to the United States, but somehow I had naïvely taken it for granted that they never returned. An interesting conversation, however, revealed to me the fact that many of the emigrants from Cadore — particularly those who are unmarried, or who have not taken their children with them — not only send home money to their mothers, wives, and sisters here, but also come back from America, occasionally on a visit, and finally "for good," to buy a farm or a modest business enterprise, and end their days in their beloved fatherland.

A PEASANT'S BALCONY, NEAR THE GRÖDNER THAL.

For, after all, as my informant told me earnestly, it is not lack of love for kindred and for native land that causes them to seek their fortunes over the ocean, but simply the necessity of earning a living elsewhere than on a soil incapable of supporting the naturally increasing population. Thus, of the seven hundred inhabitants of one village not far from Cortina, about one hundred and fifty are at present in America; and many other towns, I was assured, could show a similar proportion of absentees in the great republic, some of whom are at work in the mines of Pennsylvania and West Virginia, while others are employed in woolen mills and factories. Significant indeed is the fact that all the thrifty ones among them save their money, and either send it here, or bring it back with them. For such is the charm of this beautiful country of the Dolomites that it draws many of its children back to the often perilous work of cultivating farms along the bases of its mountains. Yet the profits from such farming must be small at best; and harvesting and planting here, on dangerous slopes and near the edges of steep precipices, are frequently attended with fatalities. Moreover, the friable nature of the Dolomites makes landslips and rock avalanches always to be dreaded. One sees repeatedly the terrible "stone rivers" which have rolled down from the crumbling cliffs. Some have been swift and thorough in their deluge, burying villages and their inhabitants instantly under a mass of rubble, perhaps a half a mile in breadth and fifty feet in

HER HUSBAND IS IN AMERICA.

depth; while others creep along at the rate of a foot or two a month, allowing the people plenty of time to escape, but leaving them abundant leisure also to behold the irresistible advance of a whole mountain slope of mud and earth, twenty or thirty feet in thickness, descending as remorselessly and pitilessly as a glacier, to turn a score of fertile farms or lovely meadows to a stony wilderness. The evidences of these terrible catastrophes are all too numerous on the road between Cortina and Pieve di Cadore, and grewsome are the ghastly records of the lives and property they have destroyed. Why is it that, when Nature has produced a landscape of unusual beauty, she seems so frequently to take delight in ruining her masterpiece?

A RIVER OF STONES AMONG THE DOLOMITES.

Eight of the villages of Cadore have genuine paintings from the brush of Titian; for he was fond of his native land, and came to it nearly every summer for more than fifty years of his eventful life. Can we not, therefore, in a measure understand the marvelous results achieved by him, when we reflect that on a nature, gifted originally with transcendent genius, was built up, year by year, a wonderful experience, gained by dividing thus his life between the exquisitely tinted Dolomites and a city where almost every group of buildings strikes a chord of perfectly harmonious colors? These were the schools in which he studied and from which he emerged the undisputed master of the art of coloring; and if, as all concede, he is indebted for some of his finest traits to the peculiar splendor of Venetian atmosphere,

whose only dust seems golden powder brushed from its mosaics, no less did he gain many useful hints, as well as inspiration, from the unique and startling colors of the Dolomites.

Pieve di Cadore is superbly situated on the side of a mountain, high above a pearl and beryl-colored river, and has a view that could not fail to have delighted Titian's soul. The little town seems, naturally, given over to the worship of the demi-god who has conferred upon it such a lasting fame, the most conspicuous memorial of him being a bronze statue in the centre of the principal square, which represents him at his work, palette and brush in hand. Close by it stands the house whose mural tablet states the occurrence here of the master's birth in terms more positive than those of its competitor in Campo di Sotto. Somehow I felt, while lingering here, a kind of pity for that modest hamlet in the flowery meadow, which also claims the immortal artist for its own. That has so little to display, while the renowned and fortunate Pieve has so much! Here, for example, one beholds not only the bronze monument but also the authentic house where Titian as a child resided, and a museum containing several paintings by his hand, many engravings of his works, a number of his autograph letters, and even

MONUMENT TO TITIAN AT PIEVE DI CADORE.

the patent of nobility conferred upon him by Charles V., and signed by the imperial hand. With all this opulence of Titian-relics, it seems almost unkind in Pieve to deny to little Campo di Sotto the glory of his birth. At present, however, it laughs to scorn the pretensions of its rustic rival.

As I was standing by the monument, a golden-haired child came running out of the old Titian house. Clambering up the side of the ancient fountain, she seated herself upon its rim, as the boy Titian himself may frequently have done more than four hundred years ago. At all events, he must have looked off dreamily here upon the purple mantle of Mount Antelao, and possibly drew sketches of it on the broad stone coping. Whoever had predicted then the wonderful career that awaited the young lad would certainly have been thought a madman. For Titian's life must rank among the very happiest and most fortunate that the world has known. It would be hard to find another in which length of days, continuous successes, and the highest honors were so lavishly bestowed. His childhood, it is true, was humble, but never seriously pinched by poverty; and from obscurity he quickly rose to most exalted heights of luxury and fame. He was in truth a favorite of the

TITIAN'S REPUTED BIRTHPLACE AT PIEVE.

gods; for, although early marked by exceptional genius, his marvelous gifts did not, as has so often been the case, unbalance him and render him eccentric. Even the graces were not wanting in his physical endowment; for he was eminently handsome, and possessed the elegant manners of a grand seigneur. The idol of the public, adored by women, courted by doges, popes, and emperors, who all felt flattered to be painted by him, he led in perfect health, until the age of ninety-nine, a life as brilliant and harmonious as his colors. A polished man of the world, and fond of pleasure, he was invariably self-controlled. Painting was ever his first love and favorite pursuit, and from his studio the master rarely lost a day. Moreover, most remarkable of all, instead of being wearied to satiety by his unending flow of fortune, and turning to the world the blasé face of one for whom no new delight remains, Titian seems always to have been cheerful. No doubt the reason of this was, in part, his good health and a naturally buoyant temperament; but it came chiefly from his tireless love of art, and his ability to gratify that love with a preëminent and never varying success.

CHILD LIFE IN THE HOME OF TITIAN.

At the end only came a swift and terrible eclipse. In 1576, when the plague ravaged Venice, till out of her one hundred and ninety thousand inhabitants fifty thousand perished, the white-haired artist, whom another summer would have made a cen-

TITIAN IN OLD AGE.

tenarian, attempted to escape from the death-stricken city to his loved Cadore, but it was too late. A cordon of troops surrounded the lagoons, and no one was allowed to leave the infected area. Accordingly, the grand old master turned back to his house to die; and it is horrible to reflect that, since his son and servants had already perished, a number of those ghoulish thieves, who always lurk like vultures in the wake of a calamity, broke into the studio and bedroom of the dying man and looted them before his closing eyes.

Every one knows the splendid monument reared to Titian's memory in the Church of the Frari in Venice. Authorities differ as to whether his body was really placed there, or was thrown into the common trench with those of others who had died of the appalling pestilence. Those who maintain that he was buried there, assert that, in consideration of his fame, the Senate made in his case an exception to the rule of refusing honorable interment to the victims of the plague. It matters little now to him or us. Even the stately monument, which represents in

PORTRAIT OF TITIAN'S DAUGHTER, LAVINIA.

beautiful relief, behind the figure of the artist, several of his greatest works, serves but to emphasize the fact that Titian is not dead. He lives in every glowing canvas that enriches European capitals, — from the superbly decorated halls of Catherine Second's Hermitage beside the Neva to Philip

TITIAN'S MONUMENT IN THE CHURCH OF THE FRARI, VENICE.

Second's grand collection at Madrid, and from the National Gallery by the Thames to the unrivaled palaces of Florence and of Rome. He lives, too, in the thousands of engraved and photographic reproductions of his works, which make the untraveled world familiar with his genius. O priceless privilege, to live thus, generation after generation, in the homes and hearts of millions, whose lives are softened and uplifted from their sordid cares by his sublime portrayals of subjects human and divine!

TITIAN'S "ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN," VENICE.

The climax of his power, as well as the culmination of Venetian art, was reached in his "Assumption," — that rapturous ascent, to a reunion with her Son, of the triumphant Mother of the Crucified. Aside from the splendor of its coloring, the conception and drawing of this picture stamp it as a masterpiece. The upturned face of the mature Madonna, the ecstasy expressed by parted lips and outstretched hands, and above all her upward motion as she sweeps toward heaven, encircled by a nimbus of adoring cherubs, can never be too often studied or too highly praised. Even if wholly separated from the ac-

companying figures of the angels and apostles, the Madonna alone would express the motif of the painting. Apart from its religious and historical significance, also, it is a glorious symbol of the human soul in its rare hours of inspiration, leaving dull earth and lifting with itself even the material body as it rises to communion with the Infinite.

Ever since — more than twenty-five years ago — I first read Whymper's thrilling record of his mountain conquests, entitled "Scrambles among the Alps," I have had great respect for reasonable mountain climbers, especially for those who, like Professor Tyndall, combine the pleasure of adventure with scientific observation of the rocks and glaciers of the upper world. Indeed, to a modest extent, I have myself enjoyed in Switzerland a bit of Alpine climbing here and there, involving moderate ice work under the direction of a guide. But when I looked upon the Dolomites, and thought of scaling their precipitous and fragile pinnacles, I instinctively recoiled. To take occasionally two or three hundred yards of dangerous climbing up a couloir, or to surmount an icy cliff by steps cut in its crystal surface by the ringing ax, when these are transient incidents in the conquest of a mountain, is one thing; but to attempt, with toes and finger nails, to climb gigantic,

THE HEAD OF THE MADONNA.

perpendicular walls and towers of corroding stone, thousands of feet in height, is quite another. Yet there are probably as many alpinists at work to-day among the Dolomites as in Switzerland; and most of them are not content to scale these mountains in the easiest way, but if there be a steeper and more perilous pathway to the summit, it is invariably chosen.

ROAD FROM SCHLUDERBACH TO LAKE MISURINA.

It was at Schluderbach, while making an excursion from Cortina to the pretty Misurina Lake, that I became acquainted with a most enthusiastic climber of the Dolomites. He was a young Hungarian, gifted — like most of the educated men and women of his race — with marvelous facility in languages, of which he spoke a half a dozen fluently. For ten years he had been coming every summer to the Ampezzo valley, had kept the same guide every season, and had surmounted with him all the noted peaks in the vicinity. His love for this adventurous life had even led him to write a book upon the subject, a copy of which he presented to me ere we parted. Unfortunately, however, it is written in Hungarian — a tongue with which I am wholly unacquainted.

There is, by the way, a popular idea that German and Hungarian are kindred languages, but there is absolutely no resemblance between them, the latter being Asiatic in its origin; and this linguistic difference, combined with many other causes, tends to an ultimate separation of the two great sections of

the empire of Austria-Hungary. When one first sees, however, the Latin letters used by the Hungarians, it seems as if the well-known characters should give him some idea at least of English, French, or German words; but close inspection brings a disappointment. Thus one of the sentences in this book on Dolomite ascensions reads as follows: *Ejfelt ütött lenn a rejtelmes homályban a san-vitoi toronyóra, mikor kiléptem a világ legmagasabb virágos kertjelee.* The literary style of Dr. Marczell's volume must, therefore, always be for me unknown and unappreciated until it is translated into one of the languages of western Europe; but what was my astonishment, on looking through his work, to find at the head of several of

DIFFICULT PINNACLES.

RESTING.

his chapters appropriate quotations from Longfellow, the first of them being the following passage from "The Masque of Pandora":

> "But breathe the air
> Of mountains, and their unapproachable summits
> Will lift thee to the level of themselves."

Another section of the volume is preceded by a stanza from Longfellow's well-known poem written on the occasion of the fiftieth birthday of Agassiz:

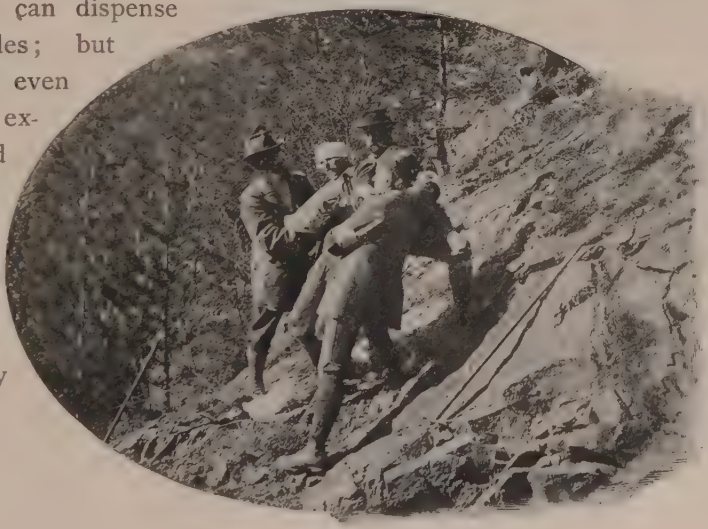
> "And Nature, the old nurse, took
> The child upon her knee,
> Saying, 'Here is a story-book
> Thy father has written for thee.
> Come, wander with me,' she said,
> 'Into regions yet untrod;
> And read what is still unread
> In the manuscripts of God.'"

Until about forty years ago the Dolomites were very little known to the outside world. Few travelers came to them, and naturally no one thought of making their ascent. But now not only is the world of tourists awakening to the unique beauty of this land, but among those who come are many eager and experienced cragsmen who wish to plant their feet upon the loftiest and most dangerous of its limestone reefs. Considering the character of these peaks, and the great number of attempts to scale them which are made, it is remarkable that no more accidents occur upon their treacherous cliffs. But that catastrophes of one kind or another do occur, and are not unexpected, is proven by the notices one often sees upon the outer walls of telegraph stations, request-

A DOLOMITE GUIDE.

ing that any accident to mountain climbers be reported there, so that the news may be communicated to branches of the International Alpine Society at Innsbruck, Botzen, or Vienna. Moreover, one can hardly open a newspaper during the summer season without encountering a paragraph telling of the injury or death of some unfortunate alpinist. Recently published statistics show that between the years 1895 and 1901 two hundred and seventy-six persons were killed in the Swiss Alps alone. How many serious, but not fatal, accidents also occurred during this interval it would be difficult to ascertain. The great majority of these disasters are attributable to the foolishness of overconfident climbers, who think they can dispense with guides; but sometimes even the most experienced meet with death on mountains which they have repeatedly ascended.

ON MONTE CRISTALLO.



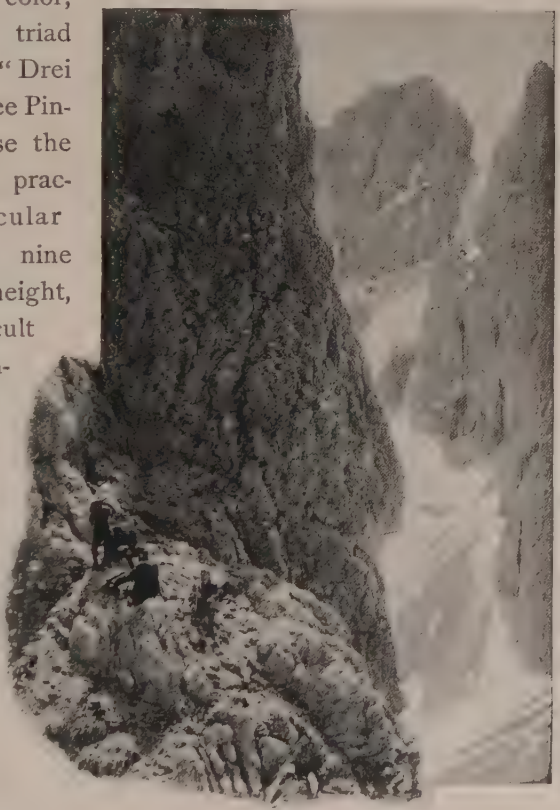
ONE MORE UNFORTUNATE.

Thus, from the inn at Schluderbach the place was pointed out to me, on the side of Monte Cristallo, where, on the twentieth of August, 1888, the most renowned of all the Dolomite guides, Michael Innerkofler, lost his life. For seventeen years he had been traversing these peaks and ledges with the surefootedness and courage of the chamois. His skill and strength, combined with an innate genius for surmounting obstacles, had made him easily the chief of cragsmen in this part of the Tyrōl. Yet even he, in making the descent of Monte Cristallo — a mountain which, though ten thousand five hundred feet in height, is not considered specially hard or hazardous, — met with a fatal accident. He was accompanying two alpestrians over that portion of the mountain covered by a glacier, when an ice bridge suddenly gave way beneath the foremost of the party, who naturally fell directly into the crevasse, dragging his comrades after him, since all were bound together by a rope. The guide, who was the last of the trio, had barely time to brace himself for the tremendous

A FEARFUL ASCENT.

strain, but even his herculean strength proved unavailing. The rope, drawn taut by the two falling men, cut through the flesh of Innerkofler's arm until it reached the bone, and finally pulled him also into the abyss. Another party, which had seen the accident from a distance, hurried to the rescue, and succeeded in bringing up the bodies from their icy sepulcher. The tourists, whose fall had been retarded by the efforts of the guide, were practically uninjured, save for a few severe contusions and a nervous shock; but Innerkofler, when at last wrenched downward from the spot which he had struggled desperately to retain, had struck his head with such tremendous violence against the chasm's icy wall as to be killed outright.

Among the most extraordinary of the Dolomitic peaks, in form as well as color, is a remarkable triad known as the "Drei Zinnen," or "Three Pinnacles." Of these the smallest, which is practically perpendicular and more than nine thousand feet in height, is the most difficult and perilous mountain to ascend in the whole region of the Dolomites. Indeed, I have been assured by more than one expert that the formerly universally dreaded



A SHELF ON WHICH TO REST.

Matterhorn is far less formidable than this. Moreover, the ill-fated Innerkofler, who was one of the first to overcome the difficulties of its fearful cliffs, gave his opinion of it in the following words: "*Schlechter als die kleinste Zinne kann ein Berg nimmer sein. Die ist ein Teufel.*" At certain points in climbing it one is obliged to "inch" across the perpendicular wall from one side to the other, and not infrequently even to lift one's self over a treacherous projection. Meantime, for any but the strongest heads, the view below is simply horrible, if one by chance gives even the briefest glance to the rough rocks piled up against the mountain's base, so far beneath him, yet so swiftly reached. On these an instantaneous death with mutilation would be the consequence of the least slip, unless, indeed, the guide had found a solid crag, around which he could wind the rope so stoutly that the man who fell would be at least suspended in mid-air until he could regain his clutch by finger tips or toes upon the smooth, sheer surface of the precipice.

THE "DREI ZINNEN."

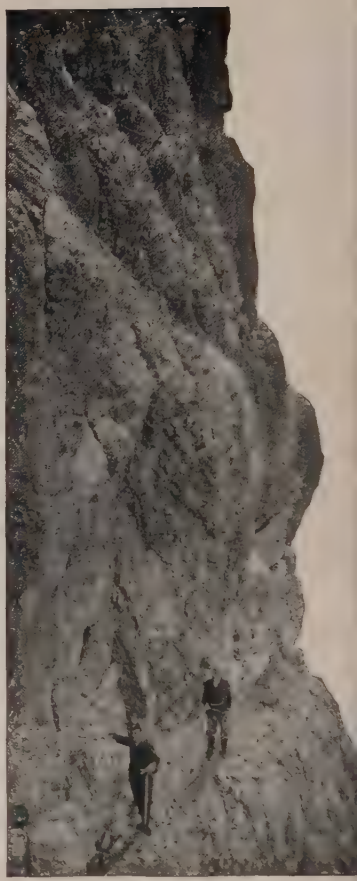
Incredible as it may seem, it is a fact that women now sometimes ascend the hardest and most perilous of these pinnacles. Dr. Marczell, for example, told me that he had recently scaled the famous "Kleinste Zinne" in the company of two English ladies and their guides. Needless to say, such women wear no skirts on these excursions. Attired in blouses, knickerbockers, and stout shoes, they have the necessary freedom of their limbs for making any effort that may be required, either in creeping up the "chimneys" of these crumbling towers, or crawling up a vertical cliff with but the tips of the toes inserted in a crevice and the bent fingers hooked upon a narrow wrinkle in the rock above. Photographs of such climbers, taken from a neighboring place of safety, alone enabled me to understand, or even to believe, that such blood-curdling ascents were possible.

A WOMAN IN THE PARTY. (CHERCHEZ LA FEMME.)

"FIVE FINGER EXERCISES."

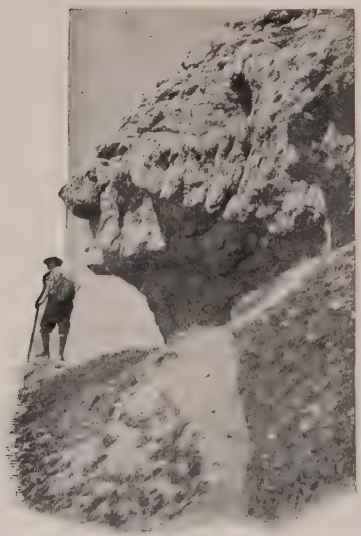
While speaking with the Doctor of the physical qualities needed for these exploits, I noticed that his hands and feet, which had gripped many a frightful ledge at dizzy

heights, were very small, and that his fingers, far from being thick and muscular, were slender, and felt soft when voluntarily relaxed. They must have been, however, on that account, all the more flexible, and had undoubtedly something of the wiry tenacity of steel. "Bad as it is," he said, "to be obliged to climb a perpendicular mountain wall, in such positions I am never so apprehensive as in the 'chimneys' and couloirs, where rocks of every shape and size are liable to fall, either singly as a monster boulder, or in a fusillade of stones. At those points it is vitally imperative for the leader of the party, if they are making the ascent, or for the final cragsman, if they are descending, to take the utmost care not to precipitate an avalanche of flying fragments on to the heads of those below him."



A PERILOUS PASSAGE.

We come, then, to the question asked so frequently, What is the motive that induces people voluntarily to assume in lofty mountain climbing the risk of falling to a fearful death? It will not do to ascribe this passion merely to a love of notoriety. Although this motive doubtless influences some alpestrians, the great majority of enthusiasts care nothing for such fame, and are content if they



TAKING BREATH.

but reach the summit and return in safety, unheralded and unobserved. Nor is it chiefly the excitement born of danger that allures them — a sort of gambling with Destiny, where life and death are the two stakes involved. A certain amount of peril, it is true, is fascinating; but men can get that stimulant in far less costly and laborious ways. Rarely, as in the case of De Saussure, the risks are willingly assumed for scientific purposes. But long reflection and inquiry have led me to believe that the great reason why appalling dangers are incurred by cragsmen on such mountains as the Matterhorn and the steepest Dolomites is *the joy acquired by overcoming almost superhuman obstacles amid glorious surroundings*. The last condition is essential, because achievement after struggle, although always gratifying, may not confer a positive delight if the attending circumstances are inglorious and depressing. But to surmount enormous difficulties and emerge victorious, rewarded by a hard-won vision of sublimity,

IN THE UPPER WORLD.

"High in the stainless eminence of air,"

is something which transfigures life and transforms character. For one must ever after feel himself a stronger and a better

man, who at the risk of life and limb has proved himself quick-eyed, enduring, patient, and indomitable, clutching the rocks with sinews tense and tireless as steel, and with cool head and dauntless heart subduing such an opposition of the powers of nature as to the world below seems insurmountable.

VICTORIOUS!

This can at least be said, — that he will probably never be a craven, morally or physically, who has ever placed his foot upon the summit of a mountain, reached only at the imminent peril of his life, and by the patient exercise of skill and self-control. Standing at last upon the vanquished peak — an isolated island in the sea of sunlit space — the conqueror feels a rapture unknown in the vale below — a rapture given him by the realization that his human will has triumphed over the opposing forces of the world of matter. Beneath the dome of heaven, and far above the earth-bound millions of the plains below, his is

"The shining hour of those who dare and win."

SCENERY IN THE GRÖDNER THAL.

Second in importance only to the northern and southern gateways of the Dolomites — Toblach and Belluno — is their western portal, Waidbruck, a little station on the Brenner railway, above which towers on the right Schloss Trostburg, early home of Oswald von Wolkenstein; while on the left, at a somewhat higher elevation, is the birthplace of the still more illustrious Minnesinger, Walther von der Vogelweide. Between these two great literary landmarks begins the celebrated Grödner Thal, which cleaves the country of the Dolomites in a direction almost at right angles to the Ampezzo. The Grödner road, however, is not so fine as the magnificent "Strada Regia," on which Pieve di Cadore and Cortina lie. It is in reality little more than a narrow shelf cut in the side of a mountain gorge, originally grooved out by a glacier. To make in this ravine a broad, macadamized serpentine like the Stelvio and Ampezzo roads would have been too expensive for the inhabitants, since, unlike those great international thoroughfares, the Grödner merely penetrates the Dolomites for eighteen miles, and ends abruptly at the foot of the majestic Sella range of mountains. This terminus of the valley is, however, more than five thousand feet higher above sea level than Waidbruck at the entrance. Hence during the entire drive one is continually ascending. As usual in all such cañons, a roaring

WELCOME TO GRÖDNER THAL!

torrent foams and frets between the narrow walls, writhing and whirling, leaping and swirling among innumerable rocks, whose sharp teeth card it into glistening spray. For several miles, indeed, river and road contest the right of way so closely that for about two hours one sees few human habitations.

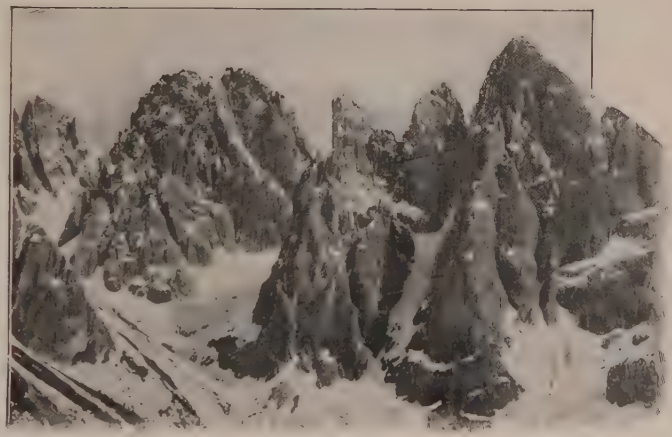
GLACIAL BOULDERS IN THE GRÖDNER THAL.

The most extraordinary feature of this portion of the route is a stupendous field of boulders, extending from the left bank of the stream along the flank of an adjoining mountain. That these are part of a moraine heaped up here by an icy plowshare of the prehistoric past cannot be doubted, nor do I recollect, even in Norway, a more remarkable display of glacial débris. These boulders cover a larger area than those of the Stony Desert already mentioned, near Lake Garda, but are less grewsome, because the most of these archaic fragments have been softened by a mantle of gray lichens, or are shaded by enormous pines.

Soon after leaving this expanse of shredded crags, we welcomed with delight the first appearance of the noble mountain which crowns the head of the valley and is the undisputed monarch of the Grödner Thal — the Langkofel. So much attention has been given already in this volume to the formation and character of these limestone reefs that space is lacking for minute consideration of this viceroy of the western Dolomites. Suffice it, therefore, to remark here that it ranks as one of the

MONUMENT TO THE CONQUEROR OF THE LANGKOFEL, NEAR ST. ULRICH.

most difficult and dangerous to ascend in the entire catalogue of Dolomitic peaks, and many of the illustrations given on the previous pages of the perils of such climbing represent the crags and precipices of the Langkofel. In fact, in such esteem do cragsmen hold Paul Grohman, who first scaled its cliffs and gained its summit, that they have erected to his memory a massive monument near St. Ulrich, and also named for him the most appalling of this monster's cruel teeth — the Grohman Spitze. For the huge body of the Langkofel has been cleft and furrowed by the elements into a series of sharp, jagged



THE TEETH OF THE LANGKOFEL.

fangs of very nearly the same height — about ten thousand feet — the mastery of which can be achieved by experts only.

But if in most respects this mountain bears a close resemblance to its fellows, the singular people living in its neighborhood merit special study. We made our first acquaintance with them when we reached the principal village of the Grödner Thal — St. Ulrich. I never shall forget the pleasure and surprise I experienced on arriving here. It had been hot and close at Waidbruck; but a three hours' drive had brought us to an elevation of four thousand feet, where the cool air was as delicious as the scenery was imposing. The town itself was also so attractive in appearance that I could hardly realize that it was a mountain settlement of thirteen hundred souls, who are for several months in winter practically isolated from the outer world. The valley, which broadens at this point into green, fertile meadows, presents a charming picture, its large stone houses being spacious and symmetrical, with an unusual number of windows, bright with flowers. Especially impressive is its parish church, whose reddish bulbous dome is visible for miles in the clear atmosphere. How is it possible, I asked myself,

THE PARISH CHURCH AT ST. ULRICH.

that such a small community, in a retired corner of the world, can have such handsome structures? And if I asked this question at a distance, still more was I desirous of a solution of the mystery when I entered the church and saw its gorgeous decoration. For its elaborate frescos, paintings, and wood-carvings are such as any sanctuary might be proud to claim; and I have never seen a statue of the Mater Dolorosa that so moved me as

ST. ULRICH IN THE GRÖDNER THAL.

one, in wood, which stands within this building, the work of the sculptor, Moroder, a resident of St. Ulrich. Indeed, the effigies of Christ, the Virgin, and the Saints, which one sees here, are so superior to the average of such figures that they reveal the secret of St. Ulrich's beauty and prosperity. It is a town of sculptors, and art is their chief occupation. In other words, the climate being severe, and agriculture at this height being insufficient to support the population, these villagers, like the citizens of Cortina, have succeeded in creating here an industry

whose products have gone out to every portion of the civilized world. Like many another great success, it had a small beginning. Exactly two hundred years ago, that is, in 1703, the pioneer in this art of wood-carving in St. Ulrich began to manufacture simple picture-frames. Others, who sought some lucrative occupation during the winter months, soon followed his example, and in the course of time the subjects chosen by them naturally multiplied. To picture-frames succeeded crucifixes; and these again were supplemented by Madonnas, Saints, all sorts of animals, and children's toys. Here the list practically ended, for the demand for these became so great that further invention has been needless.

THE INTERIOR OF THE PARISH CHURCH.

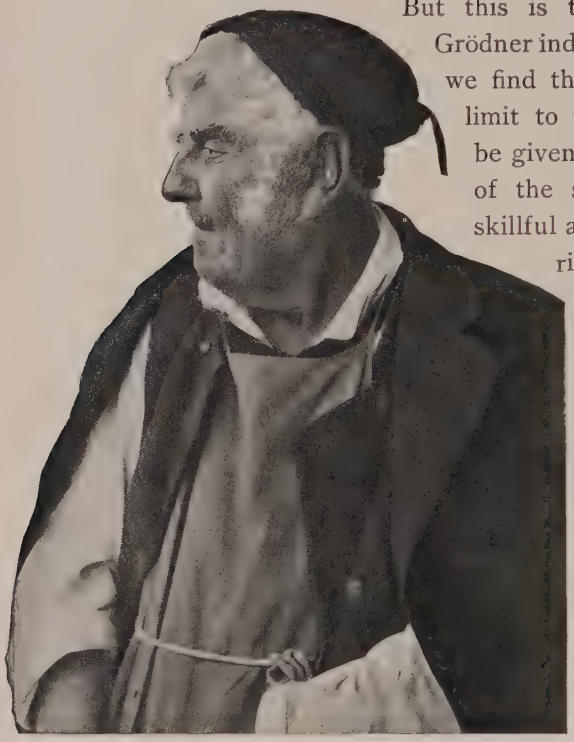
Thus is explained the large size of the houses; for they contain not only living rooms, but workshops, storage halls, and salesrooms. In making an examination of the ateliers, one passes from the sight of crude and tasteless objects to products

of real merit in the realm of art; that is, from jointed dolls, rough toys, and "Noah's Ark" animals — made by hundreds daily, and actually sold by weight — to classic figures needing months of labor to create them. In the lower ranks each worker, as a rule, carves only one or two kinds of subjects. A maker of donkeys, for example, continues to carve donkeys all his life, with possibly an occasional détour into the sphere of cats; and such a man will teach his children to carve cats and donkeys until the family becomes noted for its excellence in

A DINING ROOM IN ST. ULRICH.

portraying asinine or feline eccentricities. It seems incredible that such toys can be disposed of in enormous quantities; but in the spacious houses of St. Ulrich I saw piled up in various compartments, like heaps of peanuts or potatoes in a bin, hundreds of thousands of small soldiers, horses, sheep, elephants, donkeys, and even separate parts of dolls, all waiting to be painted before exportation. Some of the jointed figures are *less than an inch in length*, and are not only the tiniest dolls in the world, but are the specialty of one family. Whoever can remember the "Noah's Ark" of his childhood, should have a

friendly feeling in his heart for fair St. Ulrich in the Grödner Thal, for here those interesting relics of the deluge had their origin. St. Ulrich is, thus, not alone the capital of wood-carving; it is the chief metropolis of toydom.



AN OLD CARVER.

But this is the poorer side of the Grödner industry. As we go higher, we find that there is scarcely any limit to the expression that can be given to the forms and faces of the statues which the more skillful artists carve. The material is the soft white pine that grows in the vicinity; fine-grained and firm, yet not too hard to work. I watched a number of these sculptors in their ateliers. None of them had a model, or even a picture before him, save a mental one. Each carved according to his own ideal, made more or less conventional by tradition. The entire statue, with the exception of the arms, is carved from a single block of wood, which is suspended lengthwise, horizontally, on a kind of spit between two posts, so that the sculptor can at any moment turn it over, as he likes. First a rough sphere, intended for the head, emerges from the formless log. This, as we watch it, gradually acquires features and expression. Afterwards come the torso, limbs, and garments. Then, last of all, the painter plays his part — and not an unimportant one — in

coloring, or gilding, face and robe. Thus from a section of a tree, which you yourself may have seen darting down the mountain side in one of the long gullies leading to the river bank, has been evolved a form which, when completed, seems to lack nothing but the breath of life to make of it a living soul. In this way are produced the celebrated statues of St. Ulrich — Christs of all sizes, from the infant in the cradle to the pathetic figure on the cross; Madonnas, crowned with stars, and treading under foot the serpent coiled above the globe on which she stands; a Mater Dolorosa, with an upturned look of anguish, clasping the sword which the appalling scene of Calvary has driven through her heart; St. Peter, with the keys; a St. Paul, leaning on the sword; St. John, with tender face and flowing hair; and great St. Christophers, with infant Christs upon their shoulders — all designated thus by emblems universally associated with their lives or deaths. Thousands of these productions now go forth from this small mountain village to churches not alone in Europe, but also in North and South America, Africa, and Australia.

WHERE THE MATERIAL FOR THE STATUES COMES FROM.

Visitors to the Paris Exposition in 1900 will recollect the beautiful specimens of St. Ulrich sculpture there displayed. The most remarkable of

SOME OF ST. ULRICH'S SACRED FIGURES.

these was a marvelously executed group, by young Moroder, a nephew of the sculptor of the Mater Dolorosa, already mentioned. This masterpiece of wood-carving represents St. Elizabeth of Thuringia and the beggar in the charming legend, which tells us how this angel of benevolence, having been forbidden by her husband to give alms to the needy, was caught in the act of disobeying him by giving food and money to a wretched mendicant. To his suspicious query as to the contents of her basket, St. Elizabeth answered falteringly, "Only flowers"; and when, at his command, she opened it, lo! by a miracle her gifts had been transformed to roses.

MORODER'S GROUP OF ST ELIZABETH AND THE BEGGAR.

THE STUDIO OF THE SCULPTOR MORODER, AT ST. ULRICH.

The creator of this admirable work, to which was awarded the first gold medal at the Exposition, is a young man living at St. Ulrich, and his masterpiece still stands unpurchased in his house. An interesting feature in its history is the fact that the youthful artist was obliged to get excused from a portion of his three years' term of military service due the State in order to complete the group before the opening of the Exposition.

The unique character of the inhabitants of the Grödner Thal is not confined to their proficiency in wood-carving. They have a special language of their own, which has been spoken here for centuries, and which the people still maintain, using it constantly among themselves and taking care to teach it to their children, even though they may have emigrated into foreign lands. This singular dialect is called Ladin, and is a kind of country cousin to those statelier daughters of the Latin, — the Romance languages, which gradually evolved, through different phonetic changes, from the original mother tongue, and in Rome's

THE HAMLET OF ST. JACOB, IN THE GRÖDNER THAL.

scattered provinces in southern Europe blossomed, flower-like, on the ruins of the Roman Empire. It has a slight resemblance to the Romansch dialect spoken in the Engadine, and we may readily suppose that many of the primitive inhabitants of Switzerland and the Tyrōl withdrew as far as possible from Roman legions and imperial colonies, and kept for centuries their homes and quasi-independence in almost inaccessible mountain fastnesses. Of course such isolated languages would be less liable to change than those of peoples having close commercial relations and continuous communication. Both German and Italian words have naturally been incorporated into this speech of Grödner Thal, for all the inhabitants speak German also, and frequently Italian. But Ladin is robust enough to hold its own, and must be separately reckoned with in any treatise on philology. As might be expected, too, these peasants wear peculiar costumes. This is, indeed, the case in every part of the Tyrōl, although the people's ordinary week-day dress differs but little from the usual European garb. On Sundays and holidays, however, the Tyrolese don their picturesque attire, and

COSTUMES IN THE GRÖDNER THAL

nowhere are Tyrolean fashions more remarkable than in the Grödner Thal.

Innumerable excursions offer themselves to the ambitious mountain climber in St. Ulrich, two of which may be undertaken without serious fatigue by any tourists of reasonable strength. The first begins with a pleasant drive of about an hour and a half to Wolkenstein — a little village near the head of the valley, and commanding noble views. From this an easy walk will bring one to the ruin of Schloss Wolkenstein, the birthplace of the famous Minnesinger.

ONE WHO SPEAKS "LADIN."

The entire Grödner Thal must formerly have been dominated by the family of Wolkensteins; for they possessed not only this ancestral castle at the summit of the valley as a summer residence, but also another, later one, — now used for the Poor House of the district, — as well as the stronghold, called Schloss Trostburg, at the junction of the Grödner Thal with the Brenner. The latter, indeed, is still used as a residence by Count Wolkenstein, a descendant of the Minnesinger. In the whole realm of fiction or biography it would be difficult to find a life so full of strange adventure and extraordinary talents as

GRÖDNER THAL, LOOKING TOWARD WOLKENSTEIN.

that of the man whose first experience was gained within this mountain eyrie. Much of his story has been told already in these pages; but no one can behold this ruin clinging, shell-like, to the cliffs, without renewed astonishment in thinking of the mediæval hero who left this valley as a youth to take up alternately, as he chose, the wild career of a soldier or the fascinating rôle of troubadour. Speaking eventually about a dozen languages, a skillful player on the harp and violin, and famous for his "silver voice," he gained renown with equal ease as

RUINS OF SCHLOSS WOLKENSTEIN, GRÖDNER THAL.

singer or as swordsman, and visited in one capacity or the other not alone all Europe, but even Persia, Armenia, Asia Minor, and the Holy Land, and fought with equal valor against the Turks at Nicopolis, the English on the Scottish border, and the Moors in Spain! Standing within the cradle of the Wolkensteins I tried to realize that career which would have been astonishing at any time; but which in the fourteenth century, when practically all land travel had to be performed on foot or horseback, is almost inconceivable. Yet there is no doubt of the facts, and Oswald's poems have just been published in a most elaborate edition de luxe; and two of the three original manuscripts of his works are carefully preserved in the imperial museums of Innsbruck and Vienna, while the third is treasured by Count Wolkenstein.

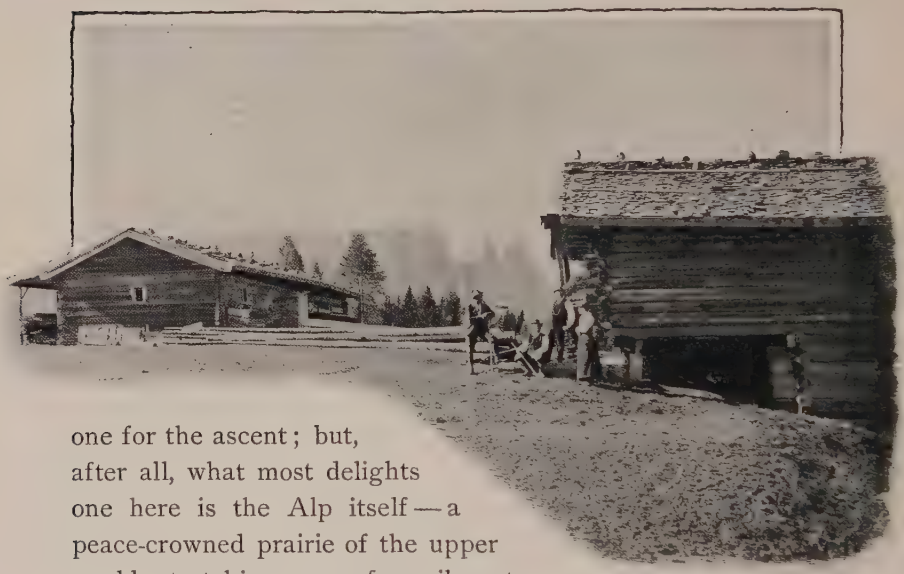
THE POOR HOUSE AT WOLKENSTEIN, FORMERLY A CASTLE OF THE WOLKENSTEIN FAMILY.

The second excursion mentioned involves about three hours of climbing from St. Ulrich, though one can ride a Grödner pony up the greater part of the ascent. The point to be attained by this exertion is the Seisser Alp — the largest mountain pasture in Tyrōl, if not in the whole of Europe. It is a vast plateau,

twelve miles in length and nine in breadth, and varying from five to seven thousand feet above the sea. On two sides it is bordered by deep gorges, dark with sombre pines, while on the east and south gigantic mountains frame it in perennial majesty.

Especially imposing is the Schlern, whose solemn, solitary peaks and awful precipices make upon the mind an ineffaceable impression of sublimity.

The mountain scenery alone would therefore well repay



SUMMER ON THE SEISSER ALP.

one for the ascent; but, after all, what most delights one here is the Alp itself — a peace-crowned prairie of the upper world, stretching away for miles at a greater altitude than the summit of Mount Washington. It is, moreover, flooded with sunshine, and blessed with such exhilarating air that one feels buoyed up, as on eagle's wings, and is unconscious of fatigue. It is not absolutely level, — fortunately for its beauty, — but undulates in soft, green waves, which seem, when viewed from a distance, to be sweeping toward one like great ocean rollers flecked with a foam of wild flowers.

Over this glorious expanse, some forty miles in circuit and

WINTER SPORTS IN THE GRÖDNER THAL.

covered with the richest grass land, roam in the summer months innumerable herds, and scattered far and wide upon its surface are several hundred dairies, herdsmen's huts, and hay sheds. For a large summer population lives upon this lofty grazing ground, and ever since 1679 a special code of laws has regulated the peasants' use of it, as well as their mutual relations here. In August, haying goes on merrily upon the Seisser Alp, for then the immense plateau is gay with throngs of youths and maidens, who while they work send forth their bird-like *jödels* frequently from field to field, and in the evening, when the work is done, make the broad upland ring with music, songs, and dancing. During the winter months, of course, a vast white mantle covers this great table-land, which then becomes a battle-field for warring elements. From these fierce, ice-clad combatants man prudently retires, taking his cattle with him to the valleys, where he occupies himself with wood-carving. Yet even then, on a clear, glorious day, adventurous spirits climb up to this silent world and traverse it on snowshoes. For the inhabitants of Grödner Thal are not so busy with their sculpture as to deny themselves all recreation, and on the frequent holidays, which punctuate their lives with

WINTER ON THE SEISSER ALP.

opportunities for pleasure, they give themselves to outdoor sports with the exuberance of children.

A third remarkable gateway to the Dolomites is the majestic gorge, directly opposite Botzen, known as the Eggen Thal. This suffers nothing by comparison with the other portals. Indeed, to its extraordinary vestibule may be awarded the primacy of the picturesque. A mighty strip of porphyry, forty miles in length, thirteen in breadth, and several thousand feet in height, stretches along the western border of the Dolomites, and its huge, purplish walls form a conspicuous feature in the landscapes near Meran and Botzen. One section of its blood-red cliffs, just east of the latter city, is perforated by a deep gash, several miles in length, from which emerges a tumultuous torrent. This gash is called the Eggen Thal. Into its sombre shadow winds a carriage road, constructed at great cost and with enormous difficulty, which gradually ascends the cañon, passing beneath vast, overhanging precipices, crossing repeatedly the tortuous stream by means

IN THE EGGEN THAL.

of massive bridges, and even taking refuge within tunnels, at points where some concession to the opposition of the raging flood becomes essential. It is a solemn entrance, especially when one has some acquaintance with the Dolomitic peaks which lie beyond, and knows what weird and awful shapes they can assume. On this account the Eggen Thal is probably the most appropriate avenue of approach to those mysterious mountains. It is a corridor of time, that leads us from old, igneous rocks, forged in earth's fiery furnace when our globe was young, to coral reefs, on which the ocean waves once broke in glittering spray, but which now sparkle in the frosty air, ten thousand feet above their early home. At times one looks up almost timidly between these jaws of ruddy porphyry toward the narrow streak of blue, so far away. It seems like a celestial river, whose noiselessness, limpidity, and calm present as great a contrast to the maddened stream beside us as our ideal of heaven differs from the storms and sorrows of this earthly life.

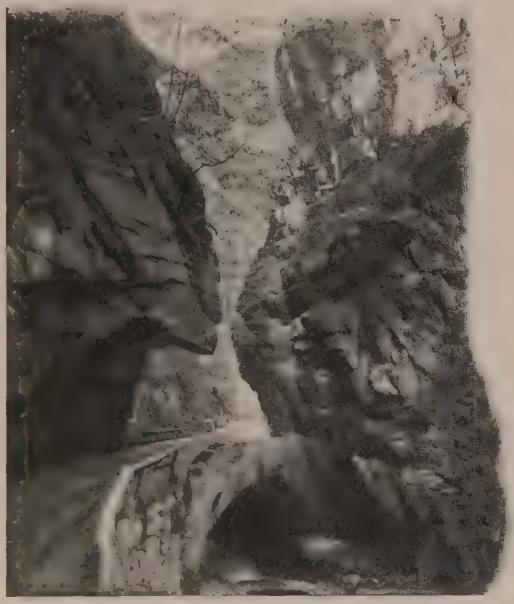
WHERE THE ROAD TAKES REFUGE

Moreover, that nothing may be wanting to complete the romance of this gorge, there looms above it, at a dizzy height, Schloss Karneid — one of those mediæval castles which play so prominent a rôle in both the scenery and history of Tyrōl. All of these strongholds have their interesting records of achievement — some of them chivalrous, most of them cruel, all of them remarkable. Karneid, for example, was the home of the Lichtensteins, who ranked, already at the commencement of the twelfth century, among the strongest of Tyrolean families. In the great struggle for supremacy that arose between the Archduke Frederick ("Friedl of the Empty Pocket") and the ambitious nobles of Tyrōl, the masters of this fortress were the former's bitterest foes, and if an undertaking of unusual danger ever was demanded in that arduous strife, the Lichtensteins were always ready to attempt it. In fact, the name, "A Lichtensteiner," was synonymous with one who then sought

SCHLOSS KARNEID, EGGEN THAL.

MT. CIMONE DELLA PALA — 10,450 FEET.

absolute independence from the archduke's sovereignty. Accordingly, in 1409, Frederick laid siege to Karneid with a powerful army, captured it finally by storm, and dragged its owners into captivity. Nor were they set at liberty until our old friend, Oswald von Wolkenstein, — Minnesinger, warrior, and the soul of the rebellion, — secured their freedom by a heavy ransom. In 1760 Count Anton Lichtenstein, the last of his race, died in this ancient stronghold, which then came into the possession of the city of Botzen. But it was speedily sold by the municipality, and is now the property of a wealthy and artistic citizen of Munich.



CROSSING THE TORTUOUS STREAM.

A drive through the Eggen Thal would, therefore, of itself abundantly repay the tourist, even if nothing specially beautiful awaited him at its terminus; but when he finds that this majestic thoroughfare leads him to one of the grandest centres of Tyrolean scenery, he understands both why the road was built and why so many wheels roll over it. Thus, after driving for about five hours from Botzen, one reaches what was recently a savage wilderness, but which to-day possesses in the Karer See Hotel an admirable hostelry, replete with every luxury and comfort attainable in the best hotels of Switzerland. In fact, the ever increasing number of travelers who, since the "dis-

covery" of Tyrōl, have flocked here to enjoy its beauties, has made the building of first-class hotels both necessary and profitable. Yet, notwithstanding the rapid multiplication of such inns, their present number cannot well accommodate, in the height of the season, all the tourists who visit this enchanted land. Hence, in the month of August, and even in the latter half of July, rooms should be always ordered in advance; or, better still, one should, if possible, arrange his plans so as to make his tour of the Dolomites a little before or after the great rush of travel. Moreover, not only have hotels transformed, within the last few years, the traveling conditions in Tyrōl, but many new routes have been opened, several others are in process of construction, and many more have been projected; so that the visitor will soon be able to drive from one valley into another, over mountain passes, through practically the entire country of the Dolomites. Thus Karer See, for example, is no longer, like the Grödner Thal, a cul-de-sac for carriages; since now a noble driveway leads thence over the Costalunga Pass into the imposing Fassa Thal, and on to the far-famed region of Madonna di Castrozza.

THE KARER SEE HOTEL.

The Karer See, which gives to the hotel its name, is a small mountain lake of pure, clear water, reflecting like a mirror the

THE ROSENGARTEN, FROM ST. CYPRIAN.

glorious mountains which surround it. These form, of course, the real attraction of the place, and are among the most extraordinary and impressive of the Dolomites. Not only are they grand and even terrible in form, — ranking among the hardest and most dangerous to ascend, — but in respect to color they are unsurpassed. Indeed, the principal range of mountains visible here is called the Rosengarten, from the deep roseate color which its rocks assume. As has been said, all of the Dolomites possess remarkable coloring, which varies, naturally, with conditions of the atmosphere; but the unique, unearthly light which sometimes comes upon them is not always seen, and cannot be as confidently looked for as the sunset glow upon the summit of the Jungfrau. Thus, while I have enjoyed some beautiful effects of color at Cortina and St. Ulrich, I have beheld the marvelous hues of which one hears so much only upon the Rosengarten. A charming

THE KARER SEE.

legend, dating from the eleventh century, associates this name with a mythological ruler of the region, called King Laurin, sovereign of the dwarfs. Here he is said to have lived, and on the slope of these mountains was his magic garden. Hence, when these summits glowed like deep red roses, upon which fields of ice and snow glistened like sparkling drops of dew, the peasants spoke of "Koenig Laurin's Rosengarten" and its jeweled flowers.

FLOWERS IN KING LAURIN'S GARDEN: THE VAJOLET TOWERS, 9188 FEET.

The most magnificent display of color I have ever seen here was on a lovely evening

in September. The sun had disappeared behind the western mountains on its way to Switzerland, but banks of clouds, like islands in a silver sea, reflected its resplendent hues and tinged the Rosengarten with the red of rubies, which gradually deepened into glorious intensity. Nature had hung originally on these glittering cliffs no tapestry of verdure; but now she

THE ROSENGARTEN WITHOUT ITS FIRE.

made amends for her neglect, for nothing could have been more royal than the robes with which she lavishly adorned them. It seemed as if a veil had suddenly been removed from them, revealing a vast shell of molten metal, held upright in its place by some mysterious power of cohesion, but which the slightest breath might cause to burst and crumble into ashes. Even the streams of powdered dolomite, lying about the bases of the cliffs, resembled rivulets of gold. Little by little this splendor faded to a delicate pink, as if the coral

reefs of long ago renewed their previous incarnation under tropic seas. Then, finally, there came a change, resembling the grayish hue that steals upon a face in death. An unseen force extinguished silently the fires of sunset, and once again the wrinkled Dolomites stood, ashen white, against the darkening sky. Yet still I watched them, fascinated by their spectral beauty. For now that their rich, incandescent glow had paled, they seemed more weird and awful than before. Some of their clustered peaks recalled the upraised hands that Vedder draws, lifted toward heaven in supplication or thanksgiving; while their long row of tapering pinnacles suggested a recessional line of white-robed vestals, leaving a ruined temple of the gods, on whose abandoned altars the last sacred fire had gone out in gloom.

A STREAM OF POWDERED DOLOMITE.

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AND

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